

The Nation and The Athenæum

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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

NATURALLY, Mr. Baldwin was unable to say anything very definite at the Guildhall banquet about the policy of the new Government, but no exception can be taken to the general tenor of his remarks. He admitted frankly that his huge majority does not indicate a public desire for Conservative Government in the ordinary sense; and in describing it as a "trust," he undoubtedly spoke at least the momentary mind of the Conservative Party, who have received their victory at the polls in a subdued and somewhat uneasy mood. In foreign policy, Mr. Baldwin promised "continuity," and support for the League, though he rightly added that the Geneva Protocol would need careful examination in consultation with the Dominions; as regards domestic policy he confined himself to housing, where he failed to see "why we should not secure the double object of a rapid output of houses and of the absorption of large numbers of skilled and semi-skilled unemployed workmen," and the need for an inquiry into the margin between retail and wholesale prices. On this latter problem, we cannot see how a fresh inquiry of the type of which there have already been so many can be of much assistance. The real need is for more efficient machinery for the continuous and authoritative survey of our economic conditions as a whole. Sir William Beveridge's suggestion of an Economic General Staff, working under the direction of a permanent Committee of the Ministers whose departments are concerned with economic affairs—on the model of the Committee of Imperial Defence—deserves more attention than it has received. The size of the new Cabinet makes some such machinery more necessary than ever.

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Before leaving for a visit to Egypt, Mr. Asquith delivered two consoling addresses to the Liberal Members of the new Parliament and some of the defeated candidates. With characteristic reminiscences of the vicissitudes of the party in bygone days, he expressed his absolute confidence in its future. But he did not confine himself to the utterance of encouraging words; he recognized the necessity for an overhaul of the party organization, and announced the appointment of a small expert committee for this purpose. Sir Donald Maclean will act as Chair-

man of the Committee, and the other members are Sir Godfrey Collins, Mr. McCurdy, and General Hutchinson. The choice of these four gentlemen, two of whom were in charge of the Party Headquarters at the time of the election, for the task of investigating the mistakes which have been made and rectifying them, has already been severely criticized at an informal gathering of defeated Liberal candidates, and a strong movement for the inclusion of some more independent critics in the committee seems likely to develop. For our part, we do not believe that faults in technical organization had much to do with the defeat of Liberalism. The causes undoubtedly lay deeper; and while it is always wise to look after machinery, it is a mistake to blame the mechanic when you have a collision.

* * *

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was entertained last week at a complimentary dinner given by the Council of the Trade Union Congress, the Executive of the Labour Party, and other leading Labour men, as a protest against the effort of the "Stunt Press" to drive him out. He took occasion to refer, in a style with which we are familiar, to the methods of the recent election. Personal slander, small, pettifogging points, tittle-tattle of the most miserable kind had been, he said, the grand weapon by which the advance of Labour had been retarded; but his own descriptions of his opponents—"some of the descriptions we made in heat"—were entitled, he thought, to "the double appellation of having been both ugly and accurate": a piece of sublime self-confidence which we are sure no one will grudge him. As regards the future, he informed us that the Labour Party are "out for stability of mind, stability of public opinion, rigid adherence to what is right, rigid allegiance to what is of good report and what is really advancing the best interests of our country and people." We are very glad to hear it. We observe, however, with regret that none of the members of the Clyde group, except Mr. Wheatley, attended this banquet.

* * *

Mr. Amery must have read with mixed emotions the leading article in the "Times" last Tuesday on the importance of his new office. In it he was assured that he is

"incomparably better equipped, as far as first-hand information is concerned, than any Secretary of State who has ever preceded him. . . . He has a practical experience of life in the Empire overseas which ranges from the Rocky Mountains to Gozo and from the Bembezi to the Parramatta." This is, of course, very satisfactory, but

"The real question now is of the purposes to which all this encyclopædic preparation is to be turned. The problems immediately confronting the Colonial Office are such as call, first and foremost certainly, for all the equipment and energy which Mr. Amery demonstrably possesses, but also for qualities of judgment, tact, and self-denial, which he has never yet had occasion to use in the same degree."

This is, we suppose, tactfully expressed, though it has a nasty ring about it. But there is worse to follow:—

"If Mr. Amery does his work as we expect him to do it, he will leave the Empire stronger to the precise extent by which he diminishes the scope of his present Department."

Carefully examined in all its implications, this cannot be regarded as an encouraging send-off to an aspiring statesman in a new office.

As regards agriculture we observe without surprise that a determined effort is already being made to whittle down the proposals of the new Government to a mere policy of *laissez faire*. The one central fact which emerges, says the "Times" this week, in reviewing the effect of various letters and speeches on the subject, is that what agriculture wants above everything else is to be let alone. Less than two years ago, when Protection seemed possible, the same newspaper declared that the state of English agriculture was a menace to the stability of the nation; and the reports of the Linlithgow Committee and the Agricultural Tribunal, both of them appointed by a Conservative Administration, are hardly less emphatic. We are, therefore, still hopeful that in spite of opposition within the Conservative ranks the new Government will be wise and courageous enough to tackle the agricultural problem. The true lines of advance are now pretty generally recognized. Education, improved organization, a freer system of land tenure, and larger credit are what the rural districts need, and we trust that Mr. Wood, who is credited with progressive sympathies, will set to work on these lines without delay. He has an excellent opportunity, and the remarks made by the Prime Minister at the Lord Mayor's Banquet should encourage him in his task.

The German Chancellor has at last issued an election manifesto which defines clearly the real issues of the campaign. He does not deny that any Government in which the Nationalists were represented would probably have greater authority in domestic affairs; but he affirms that, in the present state of foreign policy, the experiment is too dangerous to make. The presence of Nationalist Ministers would create such fear and distrust abroad that all the achievements of the past months would be put in jeopardy. The accusation seems to have gone home, for it has provoked a truly ludicrous reply from Herr von Jählin, one of the official publicists of the Nationalist Party. Herr von Jählin denies that the Nationalists really intend to wreck the Dawes scheme, and defends their incendiary manifestoes as mere protests against the political cowardice of the German people. It is significant, and reassuring, that the most dangerous party in German political life should have felt compelled, in the heat of an election campaign, to apologize for, and explain away, their avowed pro-

gramme. It is, perhaps, the first real proof that has come through that they are losing such hold as they possessed on the German people.

It is now announced that the new French Government proposes to reduce the period of military service from eighteen months to one year. It may be taken for granted from the tone of M. Millerand's manifesto, that this proposal will be fiercely attacked by the new Opposition *bloc*; but it will have the advantage of being presented by General Nollet, who was for nearly two years at the head of the military mission of control in Germany, and should thus be peculiarly well placed to assess French requirements. The proposal will undoubtedly be popular with the peasants, who have shown, in recent years, an increasing dislike of military service, and also in financial circles, where the decline in cereal production, necessitating large imports, is viewed with grave concern on account of its effect on the exchanges while French industries are in a period of transition. A further point of attack by M. Millerand's group will be the religious policy of the Herriot Government, who appear to have picked a quarrel with the Vatican on somewhat unfavourable ground, by accusing the Papal Nuncio in Paris of diplomatic impropriety. The incident is now closed; but it is significant that the "Revue des deux Mondes" and the "Revue de Paris," both widely read by the educated middle classes, have taken occasion to emphasize the importance of good relations with the Holy See, in view of French responsibilities towards the Syrian Churches and Missions.

A band of armed men who crossed into Spain from France, and were eventually surrounded and captured by the Guardia Civil and the Carabineros, have now been declared by the Marquis de Magaz to be agents of the Catalan Separatists. The news must be very unpleasant for the Directory, as it indicates that the Catalan movement is becoming really dangerous. It is impossible to say whether General Primo de Rivera has broken engagements made with the Barcelona magnates before the *coup d'état*; for it has never been proved that he made any. One thing is, however, very clear: wise and far-sighted as Primo de Rivera's Moroccan policy has been, his attitude towards the Catalan movement has been that of a soldier rather than a statesman. Even now, it ought to be possible to make acceptable concessions in the direction of autonomy. The wealthy Catalan industrialists must know that complete separation means an end of the tariff which has given their products a monopoly of the Spanish market. Meanwhile the Moroccan policy grows in difficulty, for the French criticisms of the withdrawal have now been repeated by Marshal Lyautey, and may fairly be taken to represent the official attitude. As the questions raised are of some importance to this country, we shall take an early opportunity of examining the French contentions.

It is now evident that the prestige of Fascismo has been seriously injured by the events of November 4th, when bands of Fascist militia made a violent attack on the representatives of an ex-Service men's organization during a public ceremony in Rome. The ex-Service men's organizations all over the country have rallied to the support of the "Combattenti," of whose organization General Garibaldi is the head, and several distinguished men have formally resigned their positions in the Fascist organization. Signor Mussolini took the opportunity offered by the King's birthday to make a speech laying great

emphasis on Italy's gradual return to normal conditions under Fascist rule; but he did not deal expressly with the recent riot. There is an obvious inconsistency between this new line of defence, which presents the Fascist régime as an inevitable step on the return to normal conditions, and the claim of the Black Shirts to be the sole inheritors of the sacrifices and glories of the war. Whatever Signor Mussolini may say, it is becoming evident that the sole object of the so-called constitutional reforms under discussion is to preserve Fascist supremacy. That supremacy would be in grave danger if the Opposition showed any signs of ability to agree on a positive programme going further than the defeat of the Government.

* * *

An important change in the American Senate is made by the death of Senator Lodge, who for five years had been Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee in Washington. The right of succession belongs to Senator Borah. He is no less of an isolationist in the matter of the League of Nations than Mr. Lodge; but he is a liberal Republican, the most influential voice in the Senate, resolute for the encouragement of economic co-operation in Europe, and convinced as to the necessity of recognizing Russia. It is thought likely that Mr. Hughes, the Secretary of State, will retire from the Cabinet before the beginning of Mr. Coolidge's next term. Whether that should happen or not, the new leadership in the Senate on foreign affairs must be of great moment to both the United States and Europe. Senator Lodge was quietly shelved by the President during last session. Mr. Mellon is to remain at the Treasury, so that we may anticipate an early quickening up of the efforts in Washington towards the complete refunding of the war debts.

* * *

The first of the two opium conferences in progress this month at Geneva appears to have produced, so far, little of importance, apart from some rather acrimonious dialectics between the representatives of China and India regarding the practically unchecked recrudescence of poppy-growing in at least sixteen out of the eighteen provinces of China proper. But the really decisive issues will arise at the larger conference of all States which opens on Monday. The United States, which is not merely participating officially, but is to a large extent making the opium question a test of the League's value and sincerity in the field of humanitarian activity, is represented by five delegates, including the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives. This country, so far as is known, is contenting itself with one—a Civil Servant, Sir Malcolm Delevingne of the Home Office. It is to be hoped the new Ministers, particularly Lord Birkenhead at the India Office, are alive to the importance America attaches to the opium question and to the blow that would be struck at Anglo-American harmony if reforms to which every section of opinion in all parties in the United States is pledged were thwarted by the opposition of India, or of a British Government solicitous for the interests of those Far-Eastern dependencies where opium is still smoked to the great benefit of the State revenues. If Mr. Austen Chamberlain's references to Anglo-American co-operation at the Guildhall on Monday mean anything, he will see to it that the Cabinet faces, and faces in time, the situation that may confront our representative at Geneva next week.

* * *

At the end of last month, after a prolonged and fruitless conference, it was decided by the employers and

unions in the textile finishing trades to submit their differences to the arbitration of Sir William Mackenzie, the independent chairman of their joint tribunal. The operatives' claim for a substantial advance of wages was in detail somewhat technical, and the employers would only concede a very small advance. Sir William has now issued an award which splits the difference, though rather in favour of the employers than the men. His analysis of the present position in the industry is, however, somewhat puzzling. He is satisfied that the long-continued underemployment is responsible for the reduced earnings of the operatives, and has thus led to their claim; and that this underemployment is "largely or mainly" due to high cost of production, resulting in such high prices that England cannot compete so successfully in the foreign market. Therefore he rejects the demand for an increase in rates of wages on the ground that they would increase the cost of production further, and so create a vicious circle. Yet since "profits as a whole are substantial, even at present selling prices," an advance in wages may "properly and equitably be made so long as such profits continue," and accordingly he awards some increase in the minimum weekly wages of adult men. The only reasonable explanation of the apparent economic paradox is that while the two or three big combines which largely dominate these trades are obtaining good profits on a small volume of business, the independent firms are handicapped by high costs. This points to the superior efficiency of the combines, and yet at the same time indicates a substantial use of their monopolistic powers. The trust problem is not the least important of our national difficulties, and urgently demands careful attention.

* * *

The list of honours conferred last week by the outgoing Government was a model of brevity and discretion. Mr. William Graham, M.P., Mr. Snowden's understudy, and one of the ablest economists in the Labour Party, becomes a Privy Councillor. So does Mr. Ben Spoor, the Chief Whip. Sir Cecil Hurst, of the Foreign Office, is made a K.C.M.G.; and Mr. Selby and Mr. Duff, two of the late Prime Minister's secretaries, become M.V.O.s. And that is all. If succeeding Governments could be induced to exercise so admirable a restraint, these honours might soon regain something of their real distinction.

* * *

Our Irish Correspondent writes: "Dublin has had a remarkable experience on November 11th. For the first time the ex-Service men (British) have had an opportunity to organize a celebration of the Armistice, and as a result College Green was thronged with all sorts and conditions of people, wearing red poppies and other signs of Imperial fervour. The subject is a delicate one to write on, and none of us would like to offend the feelings of the many people who genuinely celebrate on this occasion the memory of lost friends. But in Dublin such an affair cannot fail, so far as the masses are concerned, to partake of the nature of a political demonstration, and that has been made very clear to-day. So much so that one meets bewildered men asking one another why, if England had so many supporters in Ireland, did she ever let go her hold on it? The truth is that there are a lot of contradictions in these matters; the policeman opposite me as I write is clearly an ex-member of the I.R.A., but he is wearing a poppy on his uniform. The Government, as far as one can see, has no official attitude in this matter, but then the Government is busy fighting 'a miniature General Election,' and not having a very easy time of it."

THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

"YOU may make the laws, if you will allow me to administer them," said a lecturer on politics recently; and it is not improbable that, at any rate when a Conservative Government is in power, his estimate of the relative importance of legislation and administration is well founded. It is one of the paradoxes of our form of democracy that a General Election is fought mainly on the merits of legislative programmes, but results in a change of administrators which may make far more difference to the country's welfare than any Acts of Parliament. A Prime Minister's right to select his colleagues is perhaps the most powerful instrument of government which is still retained, under our constitution, in the hands of one man. Its wise exercise requires the highest qualities of judgment, courage, and independence, and the political leader who is called upon to form a Ministry is thus put to the supreme test immediately he takes office.

When he became Prime Minister for the first time, Mr. Baldwin inherited his colleagues from Mr. Bonar Law. He gave us, however, a hint of his judgment by adding Lord Robert Cecil to the number and by angling for the adhesion of Mr. McKenna. He has now had the opportunity of exercising a freer choice, embarrassed only by the number of ex-Ministers who could advance some claim to be included in his team. What sort of a job has he made of it?

The appointment of Mr. Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer, which was first announced, certainly showed that Mr. Baldwin was prepared to act with courage and independence. This choice could hardly be welcome to the stolid elements in the Conservative Party. It was the more startling because tradition has made the Exchequer the most probable office of the heir presumptive to the Prime Ministership. At first sight, moreover, there seemed a certain incongruity in the appointment, since Mr. Churchill's peculiar qualities of energy and imagination appear better adapted to the production of grandiose schemes for the expenditure of public money than for the enforcement of rigid economy upon State Departments. But on reflection we regard the selection of Mr. Churchill for this office as a wise and promising stroke. The Treasury offers an interesting and productive field for a capable administrator; there are many useful reforms in finance that may be effected by a Chancellor with imagination and force of character; it is important that a Conservative Government should not return to the blind and ruthless sterility of a Geddes Axe; and while it is well that Mr. Churchill should hold an important post in this Administration, his presence in a Service Department or in one of those in frequent contact with organized labour might give legitimate cause for uneasiness. As his Chancellor of the Exchequer Mr. Baldwin has at any rate secured a colleague of high quality. The rest of the Cabinet is unexciting.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain has the qualities of restraint, dignity, and caution which should make him a safe Foreign Secretary. But he has neither the grasp of the essential principles upon which a better political system in Europe is being gradually built, nor the knowledge of the danger points in foreign policy, nor the reputation in Europe for high statesmanship which characterize Lord Cecil. The situation created by the British rejection of the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance and by the substitution for it of the infinitely more dangerous Protocol is one of the utmost delicacy, with which Lord Cecil alone is equipped to deal. He speaks with unrivalled authority in Geneva, and it is to Geneva that

British statesmen must henceforth turn their eyes for the solution of international problems. It is a sad commentary upon public life in this country that Lord Cecil appears to have few friends in his own party or in the Conservative Press. His appointment as Foreign Secretary would not apparently have been popular in those quarters, but Mr. Baldwin was in a position to ignore their prejudices, and we fear that he has made an irreparable blunder in giving way to them. For the situation is not retrieved by Lord Cecil's presence in the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster or by the probability that he will represent Great Britain on the League of Nations. Our representative at Geneva should be the Foreign Secretary, whose whole conduct of international affairs should be shaped and coloured by his association with the other members of the League. It was a useful step to move the office of the British Delegation to the League into the Foreign Office, but the time has now come when it should be fully assimilated and lose its separate identity. Next to seeing him installed as Foreign Secretary, we should have preferred to see Lord Cecil remain free to criticize the conduct of foreign affairs and to guide public opinion, but, as things are, we can only hope that he will exercise an influence in the Cabinet commensurate with his exceptional knowledge and judgment.

The most interesting of the other Cabinet appointments is that of Lord Birkenhead as Secretary of State for India. This is a curious, and in some ways a disquieting, choice. The recollection of a speech in which Lord Birkenhead condemned the action taken by General Dyer at Amritsar may serve to allay the uneasiness with which the appointment of a man of his temperament and general antecedents would otherwise be received in the Dominion; but India is now a storm-centre, and it is difficult to believe that the new Secretary of State is the best man available for a post in which vital decisions may have to be taken without waiting for Cabinet deliberation.

Sir A. Steel-Maitland is unusually well-informed on industrial questions for a Minister of Labour; and another good appointment is that of Lord Eustace Percy, an enlightened educationalist, as President of the Board of Education. Lord Curzon becomes Lord President and Leader of the House of Lords; Lord Cave is again Lord Chancellor; Mr. Neville Chamberlain returns to the Ministry of Health; Mr. Amery becomes Colonial Secretary; Sir Douglas Hogg is the Attorney-General; and for the rest of the Cabinet Mr. Baldwin may claim the excuse, which he put forward at the Guildhall, that "a slight ballast of mediocrity in a Government steadies the ship and makes for unity."

"Neither I nor one of my colleagues," declared the Prime Minister on the same occasion, "is under any misapprehension as to the significance of the election which has taken place. We know that it is the testimony of our fellow-countrymen in favour of ordered progress and not of stagnation; we know that it is a decisive vote against minority government; and we know that we have received support from many of those who, at ordinary times, might have given their support to other parties. But they have attempted to put into power a national Government, and it is in the exercise of that trust that we shall endeavour to deserve their confidence." These words undoubtedly represent Mr. Baldwin's enduring attitude of mind, and they reflect a mood which is momentarily dominant in the Conservative Party. But it may be doubted whether this mood will last, and it will not be a light task for Mr. Baldwin to hold his Government and his party true to the spirit of the trust.

substantial modification that for zinc plates England is the chief market. The Polish market itself is trivial in extent, and its needs are almost wholly covered by the resources of Poland proper exclusive of Polish Upper Silesia. Lack of space precludes further examination of individual industries, but sufficient has been said to indicate the degree of Poland's dependence on foreign markets as outlets for her industrial products, and particularly her dependence on Germany.

To what extent is she likely in present conditions, and some months hence when the special facilities secured to her by the Treaty of Geneva lapse, to be able to maintain her position on markets that her industry has in the past served, or to conquer new ones? The question is an urgent one for Poland, and it may be stated at once that the outlook is not hopeful. Polish Upper Silesia labours as an exporting region under grave disabilities: on the one hand, an unfavourable geographical position, involving as its consequence an excessive burden of freights upon Silesian products before they reach their markets; on the other, a combination within the country of psycho-political conditions making for gross extravagance and consequent excessive costs of production. The difficulty of geographical position was only overcome under the German *régime* by a deliberate State subsidization of industry, in the form of preferential railway rates. These alone made it possible for the products of the Silesian industrial basin to compete on the inner German market with those of the Ruhr. So long as Upper Silesian industry was an integral part of the German system, considerations of national expediency and sentiment rendered the subsidization from the German point of view worth while. With Upper Silesia partitioned, and the industrial section linked up with

a political system hostile to Germany, the motive for financial self-sacrifice by Germany in the interest of Upper Silesian industry falls away; and though the Treaty of Geneva has done something to keep the old bonds in being for a time, it is unlikely that mechanical diplomatic contrivances of this sort, resting in the last resort on force, can permanently replace the free interaction of entities which feel themselves nationally and organically one. Within the country political jobbery and in many instances downright corruption lead to the overloading of industry with excessive wage and salary charges bringing no economic return. In addition, the new frontier and the high tariff wall which guards it interpose innumerable obstacles between Upper Silesian industry and many of its most essential tools and working materials. They also appreciably hamper the free access of skilled labour from Germany, without which no major technical repairs can be executed; for Poland does not as yet possess an adequately trained body of skilled mechanics of her own. The net result is seen in production carried on in many vital instances (*e.g.*, steel) at an actual loss, and increasingly unable to meet the more efficient competition of such rivals as Germany and Czechoslovakia. The truth would appear to be that, notwithstanding the efforts of Geneva to mitigate the effects of partition, that operation has gravely impaired the functioning of the Upper Silesian industrial organization. The sole hope of recovery lies in hearty co-operation between Germany and Poland for the good of Upper Silesia and of each other. Whether, in the condition of political animus at present prevailing between the two countries, such co-operation is possible, time alone can show.

C. E. ELLINGTON WRIGHT.

PALESTINIAN PIONEERS

By GRAHAM WALLAS.

A VISITOR to Palestine last September, if he walked along the road which joins the Mount of Olives to the northern suburbs of Jerusalem, would see, strolling in groups, or doing rough work on the British war-cemetery and the buildings of the future Hebrew University, a new type of Jewish youth—the "Chalutzim," or "Pioneers."

The Pioneers are the result—in some ways perhaps unforeseen—of the physical and mental selection and training carried out by the local committees who, in various parts of Europe, present Jewish candidates under the existing scheme of regulated immigration into Palestine. Most of them are young men, of an average age of about two and twenty, dressed in short khaki knickerbockers and open-throated white shirts, and bareheaded or with European cloth caps. There are a few girls among them, with bobbed hair, short-sleeved white cotton dresses and horn spectacles. The majority of them come from Eastern Europe—Ukraine, Poland, Roumania, or Czechoslovakia. Many have received a secondary or university education, so that the labourers on the University buildings look like a group of students. They are mostly in excellent physical condition, and often hold their heads with an air of confident will-power. If the day is a Jewish holiday, the visitor may see the Pioneers crowding round the dusty sports ground on the Bethlehem road, cheering their football eleven, who are playing with almost professional skill and success a match against the British Air Force, or some visiting team from Egypt. One can there watch the contrast between the Pioneers and the "Yeshiba" boys—the unhealthy-looking lads in long coats and black felt hats with oily

curls hanging down each cheek, whose type have lived for centuries in Jerusalem on the scanty allowances sent by the pious Jews of the Dispersion, and who spend eight or ten hours a day in memorizing incredible masses of Rabbinical commentaries on the Talmud. I have been told that subscriptions for the Yeshiba students are now becoming more difficult to collect, and that their numbers are declining.

If one motors north from Jerusalem, by the good roads which the Pioneers have helped to make, to the plain of Esdraelon and the shores of the Sea of Galilee, one sees another side of Pioneer life. The Arab villages on which one looks down from the heights of Carmel fade in the middle distance into the brown autumn dust of the lightly ploughed soil; but here and there, on the plain and the adjoining foothills, the new square white houses and red-tiled roofs of the Jewish "agricultural colonies" stand out, raw and unmistakable. The Pioneers and the recent immigrants who share the Pioneer spirit have built these colonies with their own hands, on land, often originally marshy and malarious, which has been bought at enormous prices (mainly with the help of American Jewish subscriptions) from the Arab proprietors. Every colony has its own economic organization, ranging from individualist peasant occupancy with a certain amount of co-operation in the use of agricultural machinery, through extended co-operation on a basis of private property, to that logical extreme of communism in which the new-born babies lie in the little partitioned cribs of a communal nursery. On one of the hospital beds of such a communist colony I saw a powerful young man with fever, reading a German translation of J. R. MacDonald's

book on Socialism, and wondered how far he found it useful in settling the difficulties of a community numbering perhaps a hundred and fifty souls.

As our party drove from one Jewish colony to another in the Northern valleys, I thought of the Socialist and Fourierist communities on which, eighty or ninety years ago, so many of the most eager young reformers in Europe and America wasted their toil and money and hopes. Was I merely watching another chapter in the same barren history? I found myself confident that I was not.

In the first place, the Pioneers have behind them a three-thousand-year-old tradition of love for the cradle-land of their race, a tradition which is strong enough to carry them over many failures and disillusionments, and to supply them with a continuous stream of new and enthusiastic recruits. In the next place, it is not so easy for a Palestinian Pioneer to "return to the world" as it was for a young American or French Socialist in the eighteen-forties and fifties. The "quota" of permitted immigrants from Palestine and Trans-Jordan into the United States is, for instance, this year exactly one hundred. It is more likely that the new Pioneer colonies will develop somewhat on the lines of the older pre-war colonies on the coast near Jaffa, which have already organized an apparently settled and permanent economic life. The new Jewish city of Tel-Aviv, built on the sandhills outside Jaffa, is becoming the centre of that life, and has since the war grown from perhaps three thousand to twenty-two thousand inhabitants.

But the chief reason which makes me believe that Jewish colonization in Palestine is an experiment which is capable of being tried out to the end, and which in some form or other may leave permanent and important results, is that the Pioneers, even when they think they are recreating the life of their Palestinian ancestors, represent an absolutely new impact of the Western upon the Eastern world-outlook at the most critical point of the frontier between Europe and Asia. One cannot help comparing it with the impact which took place at the same point two thousand years ago, when the conquests of Alexander and Pompey opened Syria and Palestine to the world-outlook of Hellenism. When I stood on the Trans-Jordanian plateau among the ruins of 'Amman I was amazed at the evidence before me of the force with which the Hellenist culture, in the centuries immediately before and after the Christian era, swept over the Semitic frontier, until it died away among the sands of Irak. The young Greek-speaking Jew or Syrian who sat and watched the plays of Euripides and Menander on the white stone seats of the beautiful 'Amman theatre, from which a gang of blue-clad Arab prisoners are now clearing the refuse of fifty generations, was the representative of a mental force of which the Roman legions and roads were merely the instruments.

The white-shirted, sunburnt Palestinian Pioneers are in many respects as unlike as may be to the Hellenized youths who sat in the 'Amman theatre and wrote some of the sad little Heinesque elegies in the later sections of the Greek Anthology. The mental force which they bring to bear upon Eastern tradition is modern science, less beautiful, but more immediately powerful for good or evil than the philosophy of Philo or Plotinus, or the poetry of Meleager. In their life of small-scale sub-tropical agriculture on a mainly barren soil the Pioneers are driven not only by religious and national patriotism, but even more by the fact that they have been trained in Realschulen and technical colleges, to look on each half-acre of their land as a laboratory, and each crop as an experiment whose results are to be accepted and applied with scientific patience and watchfulness. Every success under the similar climatic conditions of California or North Africa in growing bananas and citrus-fruits, or breeding mules, or the ploughing of dry soils, or selection of seed, is known at once in the Jewish technical school at Haifa or the admirable agricultural research station at Tel-Aviv. And if the colonists succeed in growing three tons of produce where their Arab neighbours grow only one, the influence of that fact will spread more irresistibly than a new form of government or art.

Perhaps it is in the fight against disease that this impact of the Western idea of experimental science upon the Eastern tradition of passive submission to the will of heaven is most impressive. In the little Jewish hospital at Safed, with its rigid cleanliness, its muslin-covered food and its simple apparatus of sterilization tubs and X-ray room, one felt as if the secular process in which the human race was forced slowly north by insect-borne disease from the tropical belt in which it was originally evolved might already be in process of reversal. One blazing autumn afternoon, up a little street in Tiberias, I stepped into two white-washed rooms on the first floor of an Arab house. Their only inhabitant was an Arabic- and Hebrew-speaking Jewish girl of perhaps two and twenty, born and brought up in Tiberias, and trained as a nurse in a Jerusalem hospital. Her two rooms were a babies' clinic, which had just been opened, and which already had one hundred and thirty-seven mothers with their infants on its books. The official hours were over for the day, but an Arab mother whose baby could not suck had just come in and was waiting patiently for advice. The little nurse was as proud of being a representative of modern scientific method as Paul of Tarsus was of his Roman citizenship, and his combination of Greek and Hebrew learning.

But the impact of modern science upon Palestinian tradition is likely to produce deeper and more subtle results than the improvement of agriculture and health. When, two thousand years ago, Hellenism entered Palestine, the main importance of that event to mankind arose, not from its direct influence on the spot, but from the fact that a new type of thought and feeling which was thus created swept back westward through the Greek-speaking cities of the Mediterranean, and ultimately conquered the civilized world. To-day the civilized world is again waiting, humbly enough, for some other new type of thought and feeling, some other new channel along which the stream of human hope and pity and reverence may flow. Where is it most likely to appear? One remembers the long desks radiating beneath the dome of the British Museum Library, lecture rooms at Oxford and Harvard, Roman or Anglican Cathedrals and American Institutional Churches, Parliament houses, Government departments, Geneva committee rooms, the editorial buildings of great newspapers. Compared with these centres of moral and intellectual effort the two-thirds of a million Arabs and hundred thousand Jews in Palestine, living for the most part lives of severe manual labour, may seem to us as negligible as the River Jordan seemed to Naaman. And yet it may not be fanciful to imagine that a word of power may once more come westward from Palestine. In Palestine the things of the mind and spirit have a tang of reality which those who leave it tell me that they miss in London or Paris or New York. The patriotic Arab scholar who described to me with shining eyes his hopes of reviving the tradition of Arabic culture in the days of Avicenna and Averroes; the Jewish schoolmaster teaching elementary anatomy, in his newly learnt or newly invented Hebrew, at Haifa or in a temporary hut on the Esdraelon plain; the biologist working at plant-diseases at Tel-Aviv, all care for what they are doing with an urgent intensity which makes Maida Vale and Long Island seem only half alive.

And the tang of reality makes itself most sharply felt when modern scientific methods are brought to bear upon religious tradition. Ever since the days of Constantine and Helena, the innumerable rock-tombs and springs and caves of Palestine have been covered with a spawn of drearily false legend. One sickens of all the orthodoxies as one is taken by a Moslem guide round the competing Latin, Coptic, Greek, and Armenian miracle-sites in the vulgar group of buildings which make up the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. But if one walks a few hundred yards to the Museum of the Department of Antiquities, where the results of recent Palestinian excavation are collected and compared with specimens and photographs of Egyptian, Cretan and Hittite remains, one finds oneself in the presence of an amazingly new and exciting section of the central history of civiliza-

tion and religion. In the Palestine Oriental Society, Dominican fathers, Anglican ecclesiastics, Jewish laymen and rabbis, and a learned Arab Christian, meet on the common basis of trust in the methods of patient scientific research. I sat one afternoon drinking tea in a garden outside the walls of Jerusalem with a group of learned men which included an English Canon talking fluent Hebrew to a Jewish writer whose Hebrew book on Jesus of Nazareth he had just translated, and an American archaeologist who suddenly said: "Here in Palestine history means something and feels like something. It is not a shadowy and tasteless school-subject as it is in Chicago or Cleveland."

But no one in Palestine feels sure that this newly sprouting crop of experiment and thought and emotion will be given time for harvesting. Five years hence a Turkish or Wahabi invasion of a country which the British administration has carefully disarmed, followed by a religious war of extermination, may for the twentieth time in its history have left Palestine desolate. The half-built Hebrew University, the American archaeological institute, the British School of St. George, the hospitals and agricultural colleges, may be heaps of ruins, and a few peasants may ride armed along the neglected roads to sell a bag of corn and buy a handful of cartridges in Jerusalem or Jaffa. A young Pioneer from Czechoslovakia with whom I, being ignorant of Hebrew, talked German on the hillside above Tiberias, told me that his only hope of escape from this danger lay in *die englische Geduld*—the "doggedness" with which he believed the English carry out their promises. In November, 1917, at our moment of most desperate need, Lord Balfour, on our behalf, promised that "His Majesty's Government . . . will use their best endeavours to facilitate . . . the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People," and in 1922 we accepted a Mandate endorsed by the League of Nations in which the Balfour Declaration was incorporated. Our promise was accompanied by a reservation that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine," which limited the ordinary meaning of the phrase National Home; and the Pioneers, who, as one of their leaders said to me, came to Palestine in 1919 "with the Balfour Declaration in one hand and the Jewish Bible in the other," have themselves learnt to moderate both their expectations and their demands. But the Balfour Declaration still remains. It was intended to mean something in the ears of those to whom it was addressed, and we received from them the active sympathy for which we asked. Whatever modification in the details of our policy may be suggested by experience, we are not free, as so many English journalists and politicians seem to assume, to guide our future action in Palestine purely by our own momentary convenience.

So far *die englische Geduld* has held good. The British administration spends each year its tiny Palestinian revenue, with a singular absence of Anglo-Indian arrogance and pomp, in patient attempts to secure free play for Jewish enterprise and enthusiasm, to encourage by personal influence the hard-working Arab peasant farmers to increase their crops, improve their roads, and build schools, and ultimately to bring about understanding and goodwill between all the races and religions. Palestine has, therefore, I hope and believe, fifty years before it of safety from invasion and civil war, in which both its economic and intellectual development may proceed unchecked. But if a word of power is to come again from Palestine, something else will be needed besides peace secured by patient and just administration, and that something else must come from the Palestinian thinkers themselves. A future historian of religion may record that at this moment in Palestine a handful of students are facing the same dilemma which led Paul in Antioch to "resist Cephas to the face." Shall their new knowledge and new intellectual energy be used to strengthen the authority of particular Churches, and to make for each one its particular compromise with the scientific spirit? Or shall they work consciously in the clear Palestinian air towards a message which can be preached to the whole world?

LIFE AND POLITICS

SIR GODFREY COLLINS as the new Chief Whip of the Party will have the goodwill and the confidence of every sincere Liberal. I understand he will devote his whole time to the work and leave his business, meanwhile, to take care of itself. No better choice in the circumstances could have been made. Sir Godfrey is both popular and able, free from any suspicion of personal aims, and trusted by all sections of the party. But it is with the committee of which Sir Donald Maclean is chairman that the real task of rehabilitating the Liberal movement rests. It is profitless to ignore the deep fissure in the depleted ranks which the events of the past few weeks, so far from healing, have only emphasized. Anyone who has seen much of the defeated candidates who have come back from the constituencies, has heard their comments on the strategy which sent them into the election not to win, but to lose, and their bitter denunciation of the motive behind the strategy, will understand that Sir Donald's task is not an enviable one. But he will wisely turn away from London and address himself to the country. It is in the constituencies that the Liberal revival must be sought. If the movement can be revitalized there, a new vehicle of expression will soon be found. And that it can be revitalized cannot be doubted by those who had much experience of the late election. It is the almost universal view of the candidates that they never experienced such enthusiastic meetings or found a more devoted spirit among their followers. The tide was against them, and the circumstances of the election were fatal to them; but the solidarity of the party was untouched. Whatever the situation in Parliament may be, Liberalism in the country is as robust as ever, and if Sir Donald Maclean will take risks, think of principles more than money, and not fear to shed encumbrances he need not despair of being the organizer of victory.

The attempt of Lord Beaverbrook, through his newspapers, to create a public outcry against the exclusion of Sir Robert Horne from the Treasury has been the dampest journalistic squib I can recall. The public were simply indifferent to the "outrage" which affected the Beaverbrook Press like an apoplectic seizure. How could it be otherwise? Sir Robert Horne has made no impression on the public mind, and the idea that Scotland cares twopence about whether he is in or out of the Government is a mere illusion. Moreover, if any part of the country has less reason than another to complain of an insufficient share of the loaves and fishes of office it is Scotland. In population and in wealth it forms only one-eighth of the Kingdom; but of the last half-dozen Prime Ministers of this country three have been Scotsmen (Lord Balfour, "C.-B.," and Mr. MacDonald), and a fourth, Mr. Asquith, has always sat for a Scotch seat. Both our Archbishops are Scotsmen, and the public and official world in London swarms with their fellow-countrymen. It is much too late in the day to make a grievance of the unrewarded lot of the Scotsman in England.

Much more serious as a portent is the ominous dissatisfaction which is being expressed in the "Morning Post" and other channels of the Die-Hards at the appointment of Mr. Churchill. I fancy there is more approval of that appointment in Liberal circles than anywhere else. The feeling is a tribute to the fear with which he is regarded as well as to the capacity he possesses. In control of the service departments the military Mr. Churchill would have been a public danger,

but in charge of the Exchequer it is reasonable to expect that he will prove as good a Gladstonian as Mr. Philip Snowden, who has left a great reputation behind him at the Treasury. The hub of Mr. Churchill's universe is always his own particular office. If he were the door-keeper of the House of Commons the world would swing on the hinges of his door. There is a very widespread belief that at the Treasury the better genius of Mr. Churchill will have full play, and that, whatever sops he has thrown to the Protectionist Cerberus in the matter of Imperial Preference, there will be no tricks played with Free Trade. That, with his known predilections, he should have been sent to the office when the fiscal issue is the dominant question is sufficiently remarkable. It is the more remarkable in view of Sir Douglas Hogg's uncontradicted statement that the post was first offered by Mr. Baldwin to Mr. Neville Chamberlain. The statement would be unbelievable in the case of any other Prime Minister. It is quite believable in the case of the Prime Minister who, in the summer of last year, asked Mr. McKenna to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in the autumn went to the country to ask for a mandate to bring in Protection. All the same, the transition from Mr. Chamberlain to Mr. Churchill in the course, I suppose, of one afternoon, leaves one guessing more hopelessly than usual as to what really goes on in Mr. Baldwin's mind. It is a nice mind, but it certainly is bewildering and more than a little bewildered.

* * *

A good many people must have read the chastened reflections of Mr. Clynes and Mr. MacDonald on the wickedness of the Communists with a smile. It is a belated discovery, made, I fear, only under the hard teaching of discomfiture. If Mr. MacDonald had realized the iniquity of his Communists a few months ago, had snapped his fingers at the committee of extremists that held a whip over him, and had observed the ordinary courtesies of public life towards the party which put him in office and kept him there, he might have been in power to-day, and for a long time to come, with great advantage to the country and still more to his own party. The new tone he adopts in defeat comes too late and in circumstances that do not inspire confidence. Mr. MacDonald has had his grand offensive against the Liberal Party, and if the adventure has not turned out quite as he expected he may be left to settle the account with his own followers. I do not think he will find Liberals interested in overtures from him for a long time to come. When the Labour Party has shed its extremists and has ceased to regard the defeat of a Liberal as its chief function in life, there will be some prospect of an accommodation, but in the present mood there is nothing more remote from the Liberal Party in the country than the desire for any associations with Mr. MacDonald other than those which the Parliamentary situation may require.

* * *

Henry Cabot Lodge will have a secure if unenviable place in history as the man who defeated Wilson and kept the United States out of the League of Nations. The motives that inspired the frenzy with which he fought the Peace Treaty were mixed. He was an intense party man, and knew that if the Republicans were to be restored to power the prestige of Wilson must first be destroyed. It could not be destroyed if the President was allowed to come back from Europe with the glamour of a successful share in the greatest peace conference in history, and I do not think there can be any doubt that whatever the terms of peace the President had brought back they would have been assailed with equal fury. There was also the personal motive. The two men were

flint and steel, and were born to strike sparks. The same hemisphere could not contain them both. They were equally proud, equally hard, and equally unfor- giving. Long before, Lodge had incurred Wilson's distrust and scorn, and the President was not the man to conceal his resentment. He cut him publicly, and Lodge was not the man to forgo revenge, even if it took him a lifetime. He was a Cabot, and had in a sublimated degree the pride of the reigning families of the proudest city in the United States, a pride commemorated in the witty jingle:—

"Here's to the City of Boston,
The home of the bean and the cod,
Where the Cabots speak only to Lowells,
And the Lowells speak only with God."

I see that it is denied that he was hostile to this country, and a statement of his is quoted in which he said that there was not a drop of blood in his veins that was not English blood. That was true, but no one who knew him could fail to be struck by the cold censoriousness of his attitude to this country, and in his "Early Memories" he shows that he never outgrew the feeling which the action of England during the Civil War implanted in him and the anti-British sentiment which was the tradition of Boston from much earlier days.

* * *

The English team in Australia have opened their tour with great promise. Not much importance attaches to their success in the earlier engagements, but the match with South Australia furnished a real test of their quality, and the recovery from a bad start, followed by a complete victory, will sharpen the interest with which the Test matches will be awaited in this country. South Australia made an obvious under-estimate of the quality of the English team when they "declared" with only four wickets down, but taking the match as a whole it can hardly be doubted that the better side won. The most gratifying feature of the tour so far is the evidence it supplies that practically all the members of the team are playing up to form.

A. G. G.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE PROTOCOL.

SIR,—You repeat your objections to the Protocol, which are:

- (a) "The effect of the Protocol . . . must be to stereo- type the *status quo* to an appalling degree."
- (b) ". . . in these circumstances the undertaking to support the Protocol by force of arms goes far beyond any that Britain can honourably give . . ."

You go on to state that no attempt has been made by your critics to deal with the latter point.

To this I would reply that the answer to (b) depends on whether your contention in (a) is admitted as valid, and that the following objections have been made to the validity of (a):—

1. Under Article 8 of the Covenant the Protocol must come up for reconsideration in ten years at most; British adhesion can be given with this proviso.
2. Revision of treaties is not the only way to change the *status quo*; on the contrary, a great deal can be done to change the *status quo* without revising treaties.
3. The procedure of peaceful settlement not only in the Council, but in the arbitration committees, as laid down in the Protocol, expressly allows for taking into account considerations of equity.
4. A State can refer a dispute from the Council to the Assembly, where it can raise the question of revising treaties. There are strong arguments for contending that the Assembly need not be unanimous in order to "advise reconsideration of treaties," under Article 19 of the Covenant.

5. There is nothing in the Protocol to prevent our urging that the work on "development of international law" decided upon by the Fifth Assembly should include study of procedure for the peaceful revision of treaties, with a view to incorporating such procedure (based on Articles 11 and 19 of the Covenant) in the Protocol when it comes up for reconsideration in ten years' time—or adding it to the Protocol within a shorter period.

Finally, I agree (6) that the danger of States going to war after a three-months' delay following upon a six-months' attempt by the Council to give a unanimous (excluding the disputants) award is exceedingly remote. But here we are up against the hard fact that theoretical possibilities of this sort bulk very large to the Continental nations—as large, in fact, as the at least equally theoretical possibility that a State could defy the advice and recommendations of the League and yet be able to get the party which accepted the League's award or recommendation declared the aggressor if hostilities broke out. The latter possibility, I think, is definitely ruled out by the terms of Article 10 of the Protocol.

I should be grateful for your views on any or all of these points, which I cannot help thinking *do* make it possible for Great Britain to accept the obligations entailed by the Protocol.—Yours, &c.,

A LEAGUEITE.

November 5th, 1924.

[1. It is dangerous to accept unsatisfactory arrangements on the ground that they may be revised in ten years. 2. The Protocol makes all changes (whether by revision of treaties or otherwise) more difficult. 3. Considerations of equity are only admitted by the Protocol in cases where treaty-obligations are absent. 4. Under Article 19 of the Covenant the advice of the Assembly need not be taken. 5. We fear that the disinclination of "satiated" States to develop machinery for the peaceful revision of treaties will be increased by the "security" which the Protocol gives them. 6. It does not seem reasonable to expect Britain to take a considerable risk of having to go to war in a cause with which she is out of sympathy, because Continental nations dislike what "A Leagueite" admits to be an "exceedingly remote" risk under the present Covenant.—ED., THE NATION.]

SIR,—In your leader on the Geneva Protocol on November 1st, you say that there are two points with which your various correspondents have not adequately dealt.

The first is whether Governments are, in fact, likely to carry out the obligation contained in the Protocol to assist in repressing an "aggressor" with whose reasons for resort to war they are in sympathy. The question is not one on which it is possible to dogmatize. But I suggest that the key to the answer lies in the premiss from which its consideration is begun. That premiss surely must be the proposition, with which you say you are "disposed to agree," that the worst possible *status quo* is preferable to war. For, if this be true, does it not follow that it is, both morally and politically, right to demand of all Governments that they should assist in suppressing any State which makes itself an aggressor by resorting to war, even when they may sympathize with the aggressor's motive? And is it not also true that the Governments will in fact carry out this obligation when their peoples come to regard any act of aggressive war, for whatever cause it may have been committed, as the greatest of international crimes? The acceptance of this point of view is the first condition of ordered international progress. That there are grounds for believing that Governments and peoples are ready to accept it will be agreed by anyone who witnessed the enthusiasm in Geneva for the Protocol by such widely divergent groups as the ex-enemy countries, ex-neutral countries, and the republics of Latin America. The same grounds justify the belief that its obligations would in practice be carried out.

The second point is your contention that the Protocol will "dam up the forces of change," and thereby make war more probable. Again the conclusion depends on the premiss. If the supporters of the Protocol believed that it would "dam up the forces of change," they would abandon their support. But they believe, on the contrary, that it will merely divert these forces from the channel of war, where they are evidently dangerous, to the channel of political discussion and debate. To abolish the right of war must evidently add, and add immensely, to the importance

of the political means of securing change, that it to say, of Article 19 of the Covenant. Everyone agrees that Article 19 is not, as it stands, adequate to meet what may be the needs of the situation twenty years from now. But all the institutions of Geneva are developing with such rapidity that it is difficult to believe that Article 19 will not develop to meet these needs. For it enshrines the vital principle that alteration of contractual rights contained in treaties, against the will of some of the parties to those treaties, must be carried out—not by arbitral tribunals, which is evidently impossible—but by general discussion by the community of States on the basis of the general interests of international society. The Protocol can only hasten the development of Article 19, and harness to it the moral and political power of the Geneva atmosphere, in which you rightly believe.—Yours, &c.,

P. J. BAKER.

November 12th, 1924.

"AN APPEAL TO BRITISH FAIR PLAY."

SIR,—Some weeks ago you published an article in which Mr. Lowes Dickinson drew attention to a pamphlet with the above title, published in Munich and endorsed by a large number of distinguished Germans.

The writer was courteously supplied with a copy of this pamphlet by Dr. Hermann Lutz of Munich. The writer is a man with over fifty years of business experience. Before the war he was a member of the Anglo-German Friendship Society. He agreed with Mr. Norman Angell's views before the war, and he thinks these views have been confirmed by events. He has interested himself for many years in foreign affairs, but he lays no claim to any expert knowledge. Your readers may possibly be interested to know what impression the pamphlet has made upon a man of such antecedents. The argument is stated with restraint and moderation. It is supported mainly by extracts from the writings of British historians and others. It is devoted to a refutation of the following propositions taken from Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles:—

"That Germany alone among the nations was prepared for a great war; that Germany, the only disturber of peace for decades, had prepared a war of aggression and conquest; that Germany had deliberately unchained this war in 1914 in order to obtain . . . universal domination."

"Whereas the Allies only desired 'to preserve their liberty.'"

Now, quite apart from the argument of this pamphlet, the writer could at no time have accepted these propositions, and undoubtedly many of those who signed the Treaty did not accept them. But after reading this pamphlet and Dr. Gooch's admirable history and an immense number of documents and memoirs, the writer is strongly impressed with the belief that the preponderating responsibility for the war lies not indeed with the German nation but with the German military authorities, and the wretched German system which enabled the military people to dominate the civilians.

Consider. In the early years of this century Germany had by far the most powerful army and England by far the most powerful navy in the world. The German militarists demanded a fleet so as to be able to tackle England. British militarists demanded an army so as to be able to tackle Germany. The German militarists had their way, whilst the British militarists could make no impression on either party. Mr. Balfour was as cold to them as was Mr. Asquith. Lord Roberts, at Manchester in 1912, described German policy in terms which seemed almost brutal, and having done so, held the picture up—to contempt? No; for admiration and imitation. But the civilian Government was not intimidated, and it refused to add the menace of a great army to the most powerful navy in the world.

The pamphlet scarcely mentions the terrible fortnight immediately preceding the war. What reception did Sir Edward Grey's appeal for a conference get from Germany? Consider the following dispatch, written in impassioned language rare indeed in diplomacy:—

"If the peace of Europe can be preserved, and the present crisis safely passed, my own endeavour will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it, as far as I could, through the last Balkan crisis, and, Germany having a corresponding object, our relations sensibly improved. The idea

has hitherto been too Utopian to form the subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis, so much more acute than any that Europe has gone through for generations, be safely passed, I am hopeful that the relief and reaction which will follow may make possible some more definite *rapprochement* between the Powers than has been possible hitherto."

Is the author of that appeal to be placed in the same moral category as those who disregarded it?

The eminent men who are responsible for this pamphlet seem to imply that were the charges true, then the punitive measures taken against Germany would be justified. The writer cannot agree. In the City, when we inquire into corporate responsibility, we look at the Articles of Association. The Articles of the German Empire Limited (or unlimited) seem to have been gerrymandered so as to deprive the ordinary shareholders of any voice in the company's affairs, and to concentrate all power in the mismanaging directors. It is, indeed, difficult to fix responsibility on the German people. But even were it possible, where out of Bedlam could one justify leaving the assessment of damages to those who claim to have been wronged? What would be said of such an enactment in a civil code?

It is perhaps scarcely decent to mention that some of the nations concerned profess the Christian religion. But the writer thinks that Christian forgiveness is good religion, good politics, good morals, good economics, and good business. For several years events have been exhibiting the hopeless futility of vindictiveness, so that it is just possible that sympathy and good feeling may now have a chance.—Yours, &c.,

CIVIS.

THE LIBERAL PARTY.

SIR,—I was horrified to read in the editorial notes of your issue of November 1st a statement that the recovery of the Liberal Party is assured because "the predominant mind of Britain is Left-Centre." Metaphors and analogies taken from foreign practices have frequently been a source of error and confusion in our constitutional history; yours, quoted above, represents literally nothing more than an attempt to square the circle. For the seating accommodation in our Parliament has always been and is rectangular, not semi-circular; that physical fact has probably more than anything else determined the lines of party division; and, as long as the system and its tradition prevails, a centre party can never be anything better than a cross-bench party. Therefore, if Liberalism continues to play a middle-party game, it will continue to suffer the proverbial fate of the benevolent stranger intervening in a domestic dispute.

It is easy, no doubt, to account for the eclipse of the Liberal Party at the General Election on more immediate grounds—of which the most solid is the obvious reluctance of the electorate to vote for a party which, by reason of an insufficient number of candidates, will in any event be unable to secure a majority in Parliament; but the misfortunes of Liberalism since the war are surely primarily due to the pursuit of tactics at the expense of, or, at any rate, to the neglect of, principles. As a result, the majority of Liberals, losing sight of their creed, and jammed (as they think) between the two other parties, have come to regard themselves either as the fore legs of the Conservative, or as the hind legs of the Labour, donkey: whereas a little guidance would have shown them that there is far greater affinity between Tory paternalism and Labour Socialism than between either of these and Liberal individualism; that Socialism is likely to supersede the outworn creed of paternalism in the age-long struggle with individualism; and that, whatever else may happen, there must, by definition, always be in politics, which is the science of the relationship of man to society, a party to champion the individualistic against the collectivist standpoint.

A restatement of Liberal philosophy and of its application to post-war problems, therefore, would seem to be a matter not merely of academic interest, but of practical and immediate necessity. We may, perhaps, hint at it in a sentence as the ideal of equality of opportunity and the career open to talents, with safeguards—for the individual

against evils for which he is not responsible (e.g., sickness, unemployment, old age)—for society against undue exploitation by the individual (e.g., unearned increments, minerals, monopolies). Now contrast this creed with those of the other parties. True, it is not easy to discover in modern Tory propaganda a social ideal of any kind. Perhaps this entire lack of a defined, constructive programme was the secret of that party's success at the polls. At all events, it is fair to conclude that the Conservative dreads change. Like Hamlet, he would rather bear those ills he has than fly to others that he knows not of. Existing class divisions he regards as proper, or at least inevitable. We must each of us make the best of that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call us (a mediæval tenet). Want and misery should be paternalistically remedied, provided that the structure of society is not thereby impaired. The rat-holes in the basement and the roof over the garret may be repaired—but not at the expense of the amenities of the first floor. So much from the party's recent record. Look further back—to the days of Divine Right, Non-Resistance, the Patriarchal theory, and the alliance with a State Church—and the whole mediæval, catholic, authoritarian, paternalistic basis of Tory philosophy will at once become evident.

Within a generation has sprung into prominence a new party with very different aims, but much the same foundations. The Labour creed is equally authoritarian in its conception of State activity, equally catholic in its contempt for individual judgment, even more mediæval in its economic ideals—and for a "coal-and-blankets" paternalism it substitutes a bureaucratic Socialism.

Paternalism, inconsistent with democracy, is doomed. Socialism may be its heir and successor. But, in any case, Liberals need have no fear, if they stick to their faith. For nothing has arisen to succeed, and nothing can destroy, that spirit of the renaissance, of personal freedom, of protestantism and individualism which has inspired the Liberal Party in the past and which, as long as politics endure, will continue to inspire some party, since it brings to bear on the problem of man's relation to society one of the two main attitudes of mind which will always divide political opinion.—Yours, &c.,

King's College, Cambridge.

FRANK BIRCH.

November 5th, 1924.

"THE PROBLEM OF THE PARTIES."

SIR,—Your interesting article with the above title, which appeared in your issue of the 8th inst., has stimulated me to send you these few lines. You state that "there is only one chance of a future for Liberalism as a great organized party—that it should think out a policy, and preach it, which grips the public imagination as a sincere and serious policy better adapted to the needs of Britain than any which Labour or Conservatism can offer." I entirely agree, but the trouble is that a man must have a platform and a constituency from which and to which he must preach. We must face the facts, and the facts are that a large part of the constituency to which a Liberal could formerly preach and appeal will only listen now on the basis of an understanding or co-operation which will ensure that his party will participate in the success of the policy which may be advocated. If Liberals or Labour decline to co-operate, then I believe both parties will be doomed to remain in opposition for many years to come. If they decide to co-operate—and I advocate this in every constituency where there is a sitting Tory—then I believe a great victory will result at the next General Election.

Of course, there are the difficulties of who is to lead and the policy to be preached and pressed home, but all these difficulties will be solved and overcome in the course of time. The important point is the necessity for conference and consultation among the progressive parties against the common enemy of Toryism. Communism has been thrown overboard, the Russian Guaranteed Loan has been killed, Socialism has been rendered innocuous, and Liberalism is being preached by one party and practised by the other. Why not, then, begin to seek ground for common agreement, and a common policy will soon emerge?—Yours, &c.,

D. M. MASON.

34, Queen's Gate Gardens, S.W.7.

November 8th, 1924.

THE STREET OF MEMORY

By A. A. MILNE.

"TO live reading such reviews," said Stevenson, "and to die eating ortolans, such is my aspiration."

An ortolan has never come my way; indeed, I am not sure that I should recognize it if it did; any small bird could carry it off with me. But to live reading the right kind of review is happiness enough for any author. It is doubtful, however, if the right kind of review is written nowadays. Good criticism demands a knowledge and an enthusiasm which, in most cases, only the author himself can supply, but editors (for some reason) are slow to approach us for reviews of our own books. In my dreams I have been so approached more than once, and never in vain. My paragraph beginning, "It is a question whether any other living writer . . ." carries conviction in every line; while the shorter paragraph, which opens a little surprisingly with the words, "What Mr. Milne lacks as yet," is good controversial stuff, if it has not quite the perfect bouquet. To live writing such reviews, or, alternatively, to watch editors die eating ortolans, such is my aspiration.

The editor of THE NATION has started in the right direction by asking me to review Mr. Rice's historical work.* My instinct was to dwell upon the Introduction, the chapter referring to my own editorship of "The Granta," and a half-dozen or so of contributions in the Anthology; ending up with some such turn as, "The rest of the book, though hardly up to the same level of general interest, is well worth reading." But, for once, I have found it difficult to concentrate on this engaging subject. Always between me and the page comes the shadow of—is it Mr. Rice, or is it another young man?—the shadow of an adventurer, setting out, boats burned, for Fleet Street; Colin Lunn pipe in mouth, hands in pockets of his grey flannel trousers. Trousers by Joshua Taylor? Then it is Mr. Rice. Mine were by Sydney Smith—how much more beautiful a name! With little more than the confidence that such trousers could give, and the feeling that a man who had written for "The Granta" must make some sort of appeal even to the editor of the "Church Times," I came to London.

What fun Fleet Street was in those days; how dull it seems now! There was hardly a paper, morning or evening, weekly or monthly, but had a contribution from me on its mind. To buy the current number of anything from "The Fortnightly Review" to "The Kennel" was to have a moment's fearful expectation. Would the editor have squeezed it in? On this page or the next? The evening's post, heavy with rejected manuscript, would clear the matter up, but one had one's five minutes first. And, until one had read the whole paper, one could never be sure. In some mysterious way one's turnover on Icebergs might have become the leading article. It was thus that I discovered myself to be a Liberal. In those days the "St. James's Gazette" was the paper which offered most hope to the free-lance, and in those days the "St. James's Gazette" was the high-priest of the new religion. Nobody could have struggled, as I did, through its daily hymn to Tariff Reform without becoming a passionate Free Trader. It may be that, if "The Kennel" had been a little more encouraging, I should now be keeping cats.

And it was thus that I came upon my first-born; without warning; in the smoking-room of somebody else's club. I imagined the members nudging each other, my features expressed so vividly the scene of parental recog-

nition. The secretary would stop me on the way out, and beg me to join the club. I would hesitate between that and the Athenæum. But there was shame as well as pride in my face—as, presumably, there would be if an unexpected child suddenly called one "Father." The indecency of one's initials thus paraded before London! "The Granta" was different; that was at Cambridge, among friends; but to expose oneself thus before strangers! However, one grows out of that, too.

To-day, but I may be wrong, it seems to me that the young man gets in on the ground floor more easily. He has introductions. Before his Alma Mater's Audit ale is dry on his lips he is a full-blown critic, telling Hardy and Galsworthy when they are going wrong. In novels of literary life the aspirant is always offered "a little reviewing" by a friendly editor; perhaps there is a way of getting it which I did not know. I had but two introductions to editors. The one brought me advice only: *Never take less than two guineas a thousand.* The other brought me a small reporting job of about fifteen hundred words, for which I received thirty shillings. One felt that it would have been better if the two editors had been introduced to each other first. Part of this job was to interview the first Consul, which sounds more historic than it was, but it was historic enough. Consul was the first of the monkeys of that name to ride a bicycle and smoke a cigar. The other part was to report a meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society, a less lively affair altogether. Possibly the fact that I was the only person there (or so it seemed to me) with hair above the chin, and none below, put me more out of touch with the proceedings than I need have been. I wanted to combine the two accounts in one article, but was not encouraged. And nobody offered me a little reviewing.

I am still trying to get Mr. Rice into this article, but you see how difficult it is. He is wearing the wrong kind of trousers. On the other hand (an awkward phrase in the circumstances, but let it pass), he has this book behind him. He needs no further introduction to editors. It was two years before I achieved my first book, and on the day when it finally went out of print I was a proud man. Nobody can read it now. But it had one or two good notices. The "Sheffield Independent" said: "The only readable thing about this book is the title." Barry Pain had suggested the title, so perhaps it was not such a good notice after all, but the reviewer meant it kindly.

When I was very young, I was given a pound to put in the Post Office Savings Bank. A year afterwards I withdrew the pound, thus closing the account. Meanwhile, my pound had earned a penny interest, which was duly credited to me in my pass-book. The point is that that penny has been there ever since, and if you reckon compound interest I should now be worth a good deal. This is one of my legacies to the nation when I die. The other is the money which the Manchester "Sunday Chronicle" owes me. I wrote a few articles for them at so much a foot, and I was warned that I should have to send in an account—in feet—before being paid. Unfortunately, I could never get hold of the "Sunday Chronicle." I used to wander round London Sunday after Sunday trying to find my articles. A more conscientious artist would have spent the week-ends at Manchester with a foot-rule, and pounced upon them immediately after breakfast. The money which this paper still owes me is my other legacy to the country; but I missed it at the time, and if Mr.

* "The Granta" and its Contributors, 1889-1914. Compiled by F. A. Rice. With an Introduction by A. A. Milne. (Constable. 31s. 6d.)

Rice takes my advice, he will be careful how he writes for anything north of Hitchin.

I am assuming, you see, that he is intending to do the handsome thing by himself. There are "Granta" men who have become Cabinet Ministers or Deans—an insolent waste of good material; but I feel that Mr. Rice has more respect for his pen. When I came to London, I was warned gloomily that everybody couldn't be a Charles Dickens, and it would seem that something of this spirit still animates our reviewers; many of whom are palpably upset from time to time by the fact that Wells (dash the man) won't write like Kipling, and that Bennett wilfully refuses to be mistaken for Conrad. Perhaps our author has already been told by anxious relations that, just because he edited "The Granta," he won't be a Thomas Hardy. I hope he won't. But I shall venture to wish him the luck to be a Rice.

ORPHANS AND ATHEISTS.

IN the 'sixties there flourished in the United States of America a "lady authoress" who is to this day one of the world's best-sellers. Her name, Augusta Jane Evans Wilson, is less known than her works. These, seven in number, are constantly reprinted in all English-speaking countries, and the two best-known, "Beulah" and "St. Elmo," are strewn in the most unlikely parts of the globe—possibly by tourists. Country schools give her books as prizes; village libraries will inevitably disclose one or other of them showing signs of close study; and any lodging-house in the world is sure to have at least one Wilson masterpiece in the parlour bookcase. She specializes in highly intellectual orphans (female) and incredibly blasphemous atheists (male), and the function of the one is to convert the other. The task is made excessively difficult, particularly when love (as always happens) supervenes between the two, but principle never fails. In one or two cases almost too sad to mention, it is the female orphan who has atheistic tendencies to be subdued by the superbly virtuous hero of the piece, but, of course, she cannot swear and is not "plunged in excesses," and with the aid of angina, brain fever, and tuberculosis, her regeneration is comparatively easy.

Augusta Jane Evans, the forerunner of Marie Corelli and Ethel M. Dell (and the entire Sheikh school), and in her own fashion unsurpassed in the English tongue, was born at Columbus, Georgia, in 1838. She "resided with her family" at San Antonio, Texas, for some years, and then at Mobile, Alabama, where, in 1868, she was married to Mr. L. M. Wilson. Such are the meagre biographical details to be found. Her first book, "Inez, a Tale of the Alamo," appeared anonymously in New York when she was eighteen. Three years later she produced "Beulah," a masterpiece which has run through countless editions. "Macaria" was published in Richmond, Virginia, where presumably the writer was living, in 1863, and this book, apart from its peculiar treasures of style, gives some interesting glimpses of the Civil War, Augusta's sympathies, of course, being fiercely Southern. Three years elapsed before she gave to the world her most famous novel, and the prince of atheists, "St. Elmo"; this work was considered so dangerously exciting that it used to be locked away from the young and susceptible. In a year followed "Vashti, or Until

Death us do Part"; nine years later "Infelice" (which rhymes with "police"), and it was another eleven years before "At the Mercy of Tiberius" rejoiced a circle of readers that by this time must have been vast. This was in 1887, when the "lady authoress" was about fifty, and although this novel is in no degree inferior to her earlier work, it was her last book. I can find no record of her death, and it is possible that the writer is still living.

The qualities of the best-seller are heaven-born, and cannot be imitated. Augusta J. Evans Wilson has them all. They include the narrative faculty, a serious belief in herself and her creations, a "purpose" from which she never deviates, and a genuine pleasure in what she is doing for the good of the world.

"She had never stooped to conciliate popular prejudices, had never written a line that her conscience did not dictate and her religious convictions sanction, had bravely attacked the pet vices and shameless follies of society, and had never penned a page without a prayer for guidance from on high."

No sense of humour, not the smallest flicker of self-criticism mars the perfect solemnity of her effects. Goodness, badness, frivolity, piety, joy, and grief occur in regular sequence, as do brain fever (for confessions of love or crime), "decline," and heart disease for the more painful forms of conversion. One orphan, indeed, was "brought back" by quinsy, which merely destroyed her voice and removed the temptation to live a worldly life as the greatest prima donna in the world, but this comparatively light sentence followed on years of storm and stress, and the complete renunciation of her rather indelicate efforts to gain the hero's hand, when he had told her plainly that she would never interest him. This was Dr. Ulpian Grey, who loved Vashti, not knowing that she was married. He is Mrs. Wilson's finest male creation morally (although by no means so fascinating as St. Elmo), a man of towering nobility of character. "As yet I have never met the perfect character whom I could ask to bear my name," he said simply, "but I may some day set the imperious feet of fancy upon the neck of judgment and sound reason. . . . I yield to no one in appreciation of lovely faces, but if I am aware that, like some rich lovely June rose whose calyx cradles a worm, the heart beneath the perfect form is gnawed by some evil tendency, or shelters vindictive passion or sinful impulses, I should certainly not select it in making up the precious bouquet that is to shed perfume and beauty in my home, and call my thoughts from the din and strife of the outer world to holiness and peace."

Indeed, he remained unmarried. He did his best, however, for the turbulent and very rude orphan, Salome Owen, whom he had taken into his home, since which day "he had been her sole *Melek Taous* adored with Yezidi fervour." He discovered that "the acquisitions of her mind bordered upon intellectual *salma-gundi*," and he said sadly to her, "Have you no desire to master those noble bursts of eloquence by which Racine, Bossuet, Fénelon, and Cousin have charmed the intellects of all nations?"

"No," replied the intractable orphan of fifteen (a miller's daughter), "for abstract study I have no more inclination than to fondle some mummy in the crypts of Cyrene. Knowledge has no more value in my eyes than a handful of dust of those Atures found in the cavern of Atarupe." It was she who taught herself on the beach with a tuning-fork to be the first contralto in Europe.

The works of Wilson—her other names get in the way—are best read aloud, and straight through. After-

wards, it is easy to put in your thumb and pull out a plum—they are lavishly stuffed in everywhere.

"The luscious fruit of professional success left an acrid flavour; the pungent Dead Sea ashes sifted freely. He set his heel on the embroidered butterfly, and in his heart cursed the hour he had first seen it. His coveted bread was petrifying between his teeth."

"The dew of youth had vanished before the vampire lips of ennui."

"Love revives in men of my stamp the primeval and undifferentiated tiger."

"Her heart writhed, bled, and groaned under the grip of her steely purpose. The rare blue cord on her brow told how fiercely the lava flood surged under its icy bands, and the blanched lip matched her cheek in colourlessness; save these tokens of anguish no other was visible."

All the alliteratively named heroines of her books, Edna Earle, Beulah Benton, Beryl Brentano, and some less alliterative, are intellectual, independent, and lead their own lives, of course, "without compromising their feminine refinement." They teach, paint, sing, but chiefly write, and are supremely scornful of men until the conqueror comes.

"Single women have trials for which a thoughtless, happy world has little sympathy," wrote Wilson at twenty-one. "The woman who dares to live alone and be sneered at is braver and nobler and better than she who escapes both in a loveless marriage."

There is the true Corelli ring in that!

The finest of the orphans are literary, and the flower of them all is the one in whom we see no doubt a self-portrait of Augusta Jane Evans Wilson. Edna Earle, whose high mission it was to convert St. Elmo, also delighted the world with her books, and shone in society the "regnant queen" of "brilliant and delightful reunions, where eminent men and graceful, refined, cultivated Christian women assembled to discuss ethical and æsthetic topics which all educated Americans are deemed capable of comprehending."

She was loved by her editor, a frozen man of forty, whose granite face never moved a muscle when he told his love. She deeply revered him as the noblest ornament of the profession she had selected, because, "while fearlessly attacking all heresy, whether political, scientific, or ethical, all latitudinarianism in manners and sciolism in letters, he commanded the confidence and esteem of all, and became in great degree the centre around which the *savants* and *litterati* of the city revolved." "To rule the destiny of this strong man, whose intellect was so influential in the world of letters, was a conquest of which she had never dreamed, and the blacksmith's darling was, after all, a mere woman, and the honour dazzled her."

But she refused him, although St. Elmo was still in an abyss of sin. It is always the atheists who charm the orphans against their better judgment. The editor had a face "cloudless and noble, over which brooded a solemn and perpetual peace. He seemed to her serene, majestic, and pure as the vast snow-dome of Oraefa glittering in the chill light of midsummer-midnight suns," whereas St. Elmo's finely cut mouth had never opened for fifteen years, except to jeer, swear, and sneer, and he was "fiery, thunderous, destructive as Izalco; one moment crowned with flames and lava-lashed, the next wrapped in gloom and dust and ashes." She had loved him from the moment when, as a pure-minded child of twelve, she heard him cursing her grandfather, the blacksmith, and when his mother adopted her and she got to know more and more of his wicked ways, her love became intensified. For years she thought it was hate—O Sheikh!—and when he declared his passion for her she refused him. "I would sooner," she said, "go down into my grave out there in the churchyard, under the

granite slabs, than become the wife of a man so unprincipled. . . . I would sooner feel the coil of a serpent round my waist than your arms. From the species of fascination which you exert I shrink with an unconquerable dread and aversion, and would as soon entertain the thought of marrying Lucifer himself. Oh, your perverted nature shocks, repels, astonishes, grieves me. . . . It is my wish that we meet no more on earth, Mr. Murray. I cannot lift up your darkened soul, and you would only drag mine down." She gave him her Bible without much hope, and he removed his dark, chiselled, repulsive, but handsome face from her sight for some years. When she saw it again it was pure and holy, and he was an ordained minister of the gospel, "Saved at Last," and fit to be her husband. (All atheists are rich, and he had much to give her. His residence "lacked naught that the most fastidious and cultivated taste of dilettanteism could suggest . . . in a portion of the park, surrounded by a tall iron railing, congregated a motley menagerie of deer, bison, a Lapland reindeer, a Peruvian llama, some Cashmere goats, a chamois wounded and caught on the Jungfrau, and a large white cow from Ava.")

Next to atheists, Wilson loves pious clergymen—those old and silver-haired are chiefly for educating the orphans and shedding benignant influences generally, those young and holy love them in vain. Often they provide edifying death-bed scenes. But to be a hero in Wilson's eyes, if you cannot be a complete atheist, it is essential to be so cold and "haughty," and to have so much Southern pride, that you are taken for one. So thought the daughter of Infelice:—

"Despite her efforts, above the dear, meek, gentle image of the consecrated and devout missionary towered the stately proud form of the brilliant lawyer, with his chilling smile and haughty marble brow, and she knew that he reigned supreme in her heart. He was not so generous, so nobly self-sacrificing, so holy and pious as Mr. Lindsay, nor did she reverence him so entirely, but above all else she loved him. Conscience, pride, and womanly delicacy all clamoured on behalf of the absent but faithful lover; the true heart answered, 'Away with sophistry and gratitude, pitying affection and sympathy. I am vassal to but one; give me Earle Palma, my king.'"

We have more than a glimpse, in the solemn jumble of piety and sensationalism, of the estimate Augusta Jane Evans Wilson put upon her own work, and what she thought of her critics. She is again very like her English successor, the late Miss Corelli, when she writes in 1866:—

"The MS. was a mental tapestry into which she had woven exquisite shades of thought and curious and quaint devices and rich, glowing imagery. Would her fellow-creatures accept it in the earnest, loving spirit in which it had been manufactured? Would they hang this Gobelin of her brain along the walls of memory and turn to it tenderly, reading reverently its ciphers and illuminations? Or would it be rent and ridiculed, and trampled underfoot? . . . The book was a shrine . . . would those for whom she had patiently chiselled and built it, guard and prize and keep it, or smite and overturn and defile it?"

(This problem gave Edna Earle brain fever.)

"Newspapers pronounced her book a failure. Some sneered in a gentlemanly manner, others coarsely caricatured it. Many were insulted by its incomprehensible erudition. Now she was a pedant, then a sciolist. . . . While the critics snarled the mass of readers warmly approved, and many who did not fully appreciate all her arguments and illustrations were at least clear-eyed enough to perceive that it was their misfortune, not her fault. Gradually the book took firm hold on the affections of the people, and a few editors came boldly to the rescue and nobly and ably championed it. . . . She was soon a pet with the reading public."

M. GRANT COOK.

ART

THE MAGNASCO SOCIETY.

By ROGER FRY.

ALTHOUGH Alessandro Magnasco supplies the picturesque and intriguing title to this society, the exhibition which it has organized at Messrs. Agnew's Gallery contains pictures which throw Magnasco himself into the shade. He is neither very fully nor very adequately represented. There are three examples: one, "A Maundy Thursday Sermon," is a feeble work, which can only interest by the curiosity of the motive; the other two show his facile decorative charm, which foretells but hardly rivals that of the French decorative landscapists of the eighteenth century. There is nothing here to give an idea of what we may call his Gustave Doré manner of melodramatic decoration. No doubt those who have undertaken to reveal him to the British public are arranging for an artistic crescendo of effect. But when all is said and done, he remains an odd, capricious, but essentially secondary figure.

It is interesting to see that, with the exception of the nearly forgotten Ghislandi, the painters that stand out here are precisely those whose names have managed to survive the eclipse of Italian Baroque art. They are names that have never quite disappeared.

Guido Reni perhaps comes first. He puts us off by the excessive suavity of his modelling and by his love of almost chalky-white in the flesh tones, but he shows himself as one of the few who inherited the power of organizing large figure compositions which the cinquecento had established. "The Birth of the Baptist" is a fine and well-balanced construction, distinctly personal and expressive, in spite of being so much in the great tradition.

It is spoilt for us a little by the want of tone relation between the two pallid figures and the clogged blackness of the background. Reni was not a chiaroscuroist; one guesses he would have liked to go back almost to a pre-Raphaelite simplification of the main relations, although in the individual forms he models with astonishing delicacy and ease.

His other work, the portrait of Cardinal Ubaldino, is a splendid affair in the grand style of portraiture. I guess that Vandyck may have seen some such works as this and did not forget them when he painted his Italian grandees, and, though he carried his works through with a more flowing rhythm and a far richer colour orchestration, which Reni never seems to have understood, he never had so fine a notion of design or such distinction in his drawing as Reni here shows.

What violence we do to the feelings of the dead in such retrospective shows! How Reni would have shuddered to think of hanging in the same room with the Fascist Caravaggio, though he might have been consoled to see how completely his scholarship and good breeding crush the crudities of that turbulent intruder upon academic calm!

The other great name that here gets back something of its lost lustre is that of Carlo Dolci. Those who have, naturally enough, sneered at his sugary and simpering "Madonnas," without having the patience to see how considerable an artist lay hidden behind that *ad captandum* sentimentality, will have a shock before the portrait of Sir John Finch. Here he reveals the full grip of his draughtsmanship and the rhythmic coherence of his design without putting any stumbling-block in our way. The painting, too, is remarkable: the smooth evenness of this surface is poles asunder from the licked sliminess of Bouguereau and his kindred, with which hasty spectators of Carlo's "Madonnas" have often confused them. This is, after all, in its own way, definitely "painters' quality."

Massimo Stanzoni appears to me one of the few artists of this period who deserves a better place than he has ever yet had. His "Pietà" in this exhibition reinforces the impression which the little picture in the National Gallery has already made. He is a very

genuine painter, and his composition is tense and personal.

Mr. Henry Harris, who, by the by, deserves to be recognized as a pioneer in the appreciation of this period of Italian art, lends a head of a boy by Ghislandi, which has been exhibited once before in London. It is a most surprising work. Had Ghislandi done many things of this quality we should have had to acclaim him as a great master, at least of painting in the more limited sense. For this is good enough in its dense and solid modelling and its free and generous *matière* to remind one of Velasquez and Rembrandt. Two other heads by the same hand which are shown here bring down his average a good deal. They are solid and respectable, but by no means outstanding work.

Now that we know that Canaletto spent several years in England we can, I fear, have no excuse for rejecting his name for the view of Greenwich Hospital. I say "I fear," not because this is not a very charming and delightful work, but because, for all its merits, it falls so far below the same painter's great Venetian pieces. The passion of his English patrons for topography seems to have had a depressing influence on Canaletto's art. The composition of this is almost feeble, and the view seems to be seen at a different elevation from the buildings and landscape beyond, so that there is no clear realization of the whole picture space. It is only in the sensitive modelling of the sky that we see still the authentic signature of Canaletto at his best.

The great portrait of a Senator which dominates the room from the end wall is the most impressive work by Longhi that I know. Its impressiveness is, however, on the surface, and depends almost entirely on the good placing of the great pyramidal mass. But the effect is not sustained, the construction is feeble, and the drawing essentially mean, in spite of a certain swagger of handling with which the artist has tried to pass it off.

Tiepolo, the last of the Italian Baroque, was the first to be rescued from the general contempt which overwhelmed the school in the first half of the nineteenth century. The cult for him must have begun as long ago as the 'eighties of last century. He is here seen in two admirable little works, one the unusually sensitive and tender "St. Roch," the other the superb sketch for his masterpiece of the Palazzo Lalia. I doubt if he ever surpassed the brilliant qualities of this—the power he shows of relieving figures themselves in a blaze of light against the bright luminosity of the sky behind. The other works attributed to him here do him no service, and may, I hope, be relegated to another category.

It is to be hoped that the Magnasco Society will pursue its work and dig out for us many more good things from the forgotten hoards of private collections.

FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA

HERACLIUS," by Lord Howard de Walden, of which several matinées are being given at the New Oxford Theatre, is an example of those mighty tasks the human spirit does not hesitate to shoulder. This four-act tragi-comedy of mediæval Byzantium is Shakespearean in scale. We are continually reminded of "Antony and Cleopatra"; as the scene changes from Byzantium armies sweep across the stage, men weep, women die, and archimandrites curse. But Lord Howard de Walden has complicated the issue still further; not for him are the simple effects of heroic drama. His Heraclius has about him the subtlety of Racine. He is a man "who dies with a smile for a creed he does not believe in," a superb hero without faith, pushed by circumstances and a woman into saving the Empire, yet sighing all through his epopee for his African farm. Lord Howard de Walden can hardly be blamed for not having been quite successful in an achievement which was beyond individual capacity and needed a committee of geniuses to develop worthily. Whether

a mere attempt to do something great is admirable in itself, is a matter of discussion. Goethe was strongly of opinion that it was not. Lord Howard de Walden developed what seemed to me rather a good dramatic technique, measured prose becoming blank verse at important moments. Unfortunately, the declamation of the cast was so bad that I could never be quite certain of the author's medium.

It is really hopeless to produce Shakespeare with actors incapable of reciting or apparently understanding blank verse. The performance of "King John" given last Sunday by "The Fellowship of Players" is a good example of what I mean. "King John" is not one of Shakespeare's greatest plays. But it is full of the ravishing lyric verse of his early-middle period, and it also contains a great deal of very amusing and cynical character study. The first essential for bringing out these two qualities in the play is the delivery of the lines in a simple and straightforward manner. Unfortunately this seems the one thing of which modern actors are quite incapable. Mr. Ernest Milton, for instance, is an extremely competent actor in modern realistic drama. His "King John" showed conclusively that he had not the faintest idea of what Shakespeare was getting at. He mouthed and ranted and whined and chanted; in fact, was everything except clear and intelligible. For whole scenes together I hardly heard a word of what the actors were saying. The best performance was given, I thought, by Mr. Cecil Truncer, who took the not very important part of "First Citizen." He spoke his lines in a sensible and grammatical manner, which brought out his character in a clear and amusing way. One starts with a vague admiration for persons keen enough to organize highbrow entertainments on Sunday evening. But it is no compliment to Shakespeare to produce him so unintelligently.

The film "Moon of Israel," which is being shown for three weeks at the London Pavilion, is a production of the British firm of Stoll's in conjunction with an Austrian company. The story is from a novel by Sir H. Rider Haggard and is well told in the film, being not too much interrupted by the large spectacular scenes, which are made relevant to it. These, with one or two exceptions where the lighting is not successful, are quite well staged; the handling of the crowds and the acting of the principals are good. The story deals with the love of a great Egyptian prince for a Jewish slave-girl, and eventually with the deliverance of the Jews from Egyptian bondage and their flight from Egypt. In this latter part of the film there are scenes, such as the dividing of the waters of the Red Sea, which are almost if not exactly identical with those in the American film "The Ten Commandments," shown here a short time ago. Certain scenes also are entirely contrary to Biblical history. The film shows the Jews living in Egypt in a strange, mud-built city and meeting at a Temple which contains the Ark, the Seven-branched Candlesticks, &c., none of which, according to the Book of Exodus, were made till long afterwards.

The one hundred and sixty-second exhibition of the Royal Society of British Artists, at Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, is far from exhilarating. It contains about four hundred pictures, more than half of which are water-colours, and on the whole the standard of accomplishment is fairly high. But as one goes round the walls it becomes clear that almost all the pictures immediately divide themselves into two distinct and unoriginal types—those which are directly founded on the old dead Academy tradition, and those which are painted in a smart, superficial "modern" manner, such as is taught at certain art schools. There are a good many portraits; there are artistic interiors; there are pictures of the religious-sentimental type, pictures with poetical titles, landscapes in the manner of Constable and of Corot's later period, picturesque corners of London and of country towns, bouquets of flowers. Most of them depend entirely on their subjects for any interest they may have.

A correspondent writes to me: "You seem to know so much about so many different kinds of things that perhaps you might be able to tell me whether there was truth in the rumour that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's original intention was to give only one Dissolution Honour, a K.C.B. to Mr. Gregory of the Foreign Office, and that his intention was only frustrated by Mr. Gregory's modesty and respect for the traditions of his Majesty's Civil Service."

The following is from "Le Cri de Paris":—

Le Tigre travaille:

M. Tardieu, qui a momentanément renoncé à la politique, n'a pas renoncé à ses amitiés. Il est allé passer quelques jours chez le Tigre, en Vendée. Il a trouvé M. Clemenceau plus jeune que jamais.

— Je travaille, je travaille, lui a dit allègrement l'ancien président du Conseil.

— A vos Mémoires?

Le Tigre haussa les épaules.

— A quoi bon! fit-il. Non, je reviens à des études qui m'ont toujours intéressé. J'écris un livre sur l'Idée de Dieu à travers les âges.

— Diable, fit M. Tardieu, c'est sévère.

— Erreur, mon cher. On peut toucher à tout dans un pareil bouquin.

Et, avec un sourire goguenard:

— Vous verrez que je trouverai moyen d'y parler de Poincaré.

Things to see or hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, November 15.—Elgar's "Spirit of England" and Ethel Smyth's "Mass in D," Royal Choral Society, at 2.30, at Albert Hall.

Jean Sterling Mackinlay, Matinée Recital, at Æolian Hall.

Orchestral Concert for Children at 11, at Central Hall.

Sunday, November 16.—"Epicene," Phoenix Society, at Regent.

"Guilty Souls," 300 Club, at R.A.D.A. Theatre.

Monday, November 17.—"The Red King," at Maddermarket, Norwich.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream," at Old Vic.

Tuesday, November 18.—Gerald Cooper, Chamber Concert, Casals and Violet Gordon Woodhouse, at 3, at Æolian Hall.

Wednesday, November 19.—Suggia and Da Motta, at 5.30, at Wigmore Hall.

Thursday, November 20.—Royal Philharmonic Society Concert, at 8, at Queen's Hall.

Adelaide Rind, Song Recital, at 8.15, at Wigmore Hall.

OMICRON.

THE PRESENCE.

WHY say Death? for Death's neither harsh nor kind:
Other pleasures or pains could hold the mind
If she were dead, for dead is gone indeed,
Lost beyond recovery and need,
Discarded, ended, rotten underground,
Of whom no personal feature could be found
To stand out from the soft blur evenly spread
On memory—if she were truly dead!

But living still, barred from accustomed use
Of body and dress and motion, in abuse
Of loving-kindness (for our anguish, too,
Denies we love her as we swear we do)
She fills the house and garden terribly
With her bewilderment, accusingly
Enforcing her too sharp identity,
Till every stone and flower, bottle and book,
Cries out her name, pierces us with her look:
"You are deaf, hear me!
You are blind, see me!"

How deaf or blind
When horror unrelieved maddens the mind
With those same pangs that lately choked her breath
And changed her substance, but have brought no death?

ROBERT GRAVES.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

CRIME AND CRIMINALS.

THERE have been some very good books on crime published lately. The most recent volume in "Notable British Trials" is "Trial of Adolf Beck (1877-1904)," edited by Eric R. Watson (Hodge. 10s. 6d.). As is usual with this series, the book is admirably edited. The Beck Case is well worth detailed study from many points of view. It was, as Mr. Watson says, "one of the most remarkable instances of a genuine miscarriage of justice" that we know of. Both in 1896 and 1904 Beck was convicted for obtaining money under false pretences from a large number of women, and there is no shadow of doubt that in each case the offences had been committed, not by Beck, but by a man called William Thomas, alias John Smith. For the offences committed in 1896 Beck was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude, and he was only released on licence in 1901. He was not sentenced in 1904, because immediately after his conviction it was proved that he was an innocent man. One cannot read the story of, and the evidence in, this case, and the report of the Committee of Inquiry, without considerable misgiving. The miscarriage of justice was due to two things: (1) mistaken identity, and (2) owing to the conduct of the prosecution and the ruling of the judge in 1896, Beck "was convicted on evidence," as the Committee of Inquiry found, "from which everything that told, or might be thought to tell, in his favour, was excluded. His case was never tried." John Smith, the real offender, had already been convicted in 1877 of similar offences, and the prosecution in 1896 believed that Beck was John Smith. After conviction, in prison the prison authorities gave Beck Smith's letter and number of designation. The constable who had arrested Smith in 1877 swore that Beck was Smith. Yet there was proof positive in the prison records that Beck was not Smith, for it was on record that when Smith was serving his sentence in 1879 he was examined and found to be circumcized, while Beck was not circumcized. The worst feature in the case was that in 1898, while Beck was serving his sentence, owing to inquiries into a petition the Home Office actually learnt this fact, namely, that Beck could not possibly be Smith, and yet nothing was done except to give the unfortunate prisoner a new number and mark, indicating that he had not previously been convicted.

* * *

By a coincidence, there have also appeared at the same time three books about American criminals and crime: "Problems of Modern American Crime," by Veronica King (Heath Cranton. 12s. 6d.); "Studies in Murder," by Edmund Lester Pearson (Macmillan. 14s.); and "The Criminal as a Human Being," by George S. Dougherty (Appleton. 7s. 6d.). It appears from these books that American crime tends to be rather different from European, or at any rate British, crime. Nothing could be more stolidly respectable than the behaviour of everyone in the Beck case, from the judge and policeman down to the real and the supposed offender. Our ancient tradition of living, thinking, and speaking in half-tones has filtered down from Eton and Balliol (through the Bench and the Bar, perhaps) to the murderer in the dock. Miss King's extremely interesting book shows that this is not the case in America. There crime, and the business or sport of pursuing and punishing it, tends to be hectic and florid, blaringly and glaringly theatrical. This is partly the result, one is inclined to think, of an over-developed Press. Miss King's first two murder cases go to prove this. In one the beautiful Madalynne

Obenchain, the wife of a Chicago lawyer, was accused, on pretty damning evidence, of the murder of Belton Kennedy, who had not been as much in love with her as she wished. In the other, Clara Phillips bought a hammer on Tuesday morning, and on Wednesday, having taken her two friends, Alberta Meadows and Peggy Caffee, for a drive in her car to a lonely spot, proceeded to beat Alberta to death with the hammer, in the presence of the horrified Peggy—motive, jealousy. Neither of these murders had anything in it to recommend it. Yet the Press contrived to stage them both in the most astonishingly theatrical manner; the murderesses played up to the Press and the public to the murderesses. Madalynne Obenchain and Clara Phillips became popular heroines, until the one retired acquitted to private life and the other to ten years' penal servitude. There are other interesting chapters in Miss King's book, particularly the one on the Arbuckle case, in which, apparently, the hectic way in which the Press, the courts, and the public regard crime led to great injustice towards a perfectly innocent man.

* * *

Mr. Pearson's book, which is one of the best of its kind that I have read, makes me think that perhaps the theatrical ingredient in American crime is a comparatively late introduction. He gives a detailed account of three fascinating murder cases—the Borden Case, the Twenty-third Street Murder, and the murder of the captain, his wife, and the second mate of the "Herbert Fuller." All are old cases which took place thirty or forty years ago; they have the slow *tempo* and air of outward respectability which, in this country, we still expect in murder. Some people may object to the Borden case and the murder of Benjamin Nathan in Twenty-third Street, because in neither case was the mystery disentangled by a conviction. Personally, I think that they are both fascinating, as narrated by Mr. Pearson. He tells you the story of the crime exactly as it should be told, slowly and in great detail. This is particularly important in the mysterious Borden Case. Old Mr. Borden and his wife were murdered in their house in the middle of the town of Fall River in the daytime, and their younger daughter, a lady of thirty-two years of age, was tried for the murder. They were perfectly respectable middle-class people, and there appeared to be no adequate motive. Miss Lizzie Borden was eventually acquitted, but I think she was really guilty. Mr. Pearson's detailed account of the habits and relations of the various members of the household, and of the events of the crucial day, gives one an extraordinary psychological setting for the mystery.

* * *

Mr. Dougherty's is a different kind of book from the others, but it is extremely interesting. The author was a Deputy Commissioner and Chief of Detectives in the New York Police Department. He was for many years a Pinkerton detective. He looks at crime from the detective's point of view, but his title is not a misnomer, for obviously he looked upon the criminal as a human being, and a human being for whom he had a considerable amount of affection. The best chapters in the book are those in which he explains exactly how a gang of expert criminals would plan a big robbery, in which he deals with the art of shadowing, and in which he tells us something about the art of obtaining confessions and the famous "third degree." He also gives some very interesting facts about the art of blackmail.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Robert Louis Stevenson, *Man and Writer*. By J. A. STEUART. Two vols. (Sampson Low. 32s.)

THERE are few books which I have found it so hard to read with patience as this. The man whose life it so elaborately relates and discusses was my closest friend, and such traits of him as I can recognize in Mr. Steuart's pages are set forth not only with a wearying waste of words, but in a manner often self-contradictory, and at best all disguisedly and disproportionately. Let not the reader suppose that I am moved to this judgment by any fault I have to find with Mr. Steuart's treatment of myself: on the contrary, where he has occasion to mention me he does so always with complete courtesy and kindly recognition of such part as I played in the story.

To support what may read like sweeping charges against an author whose work, I observe, has been getting in many quarters much more praise than it seems to me to merit,—here, from within the first fifty pages of Mr. Steuart's book, is surely an ideal example of platitude, in regard to the bogey stories with which the nurse Cummy was accustomed to entertain her young charge:—

"Too much must not be made of Cummy's ghostly recitals. The stories with which she made Lou's flesh creep were, and are, a common possession. All over the land other nurses and innumerable mothers were telling similar tales to similarly enchanted little listeners. 'Tell me a story' is a nursery request familiar in every age and every clime; for the love of story-telling is as old and as universal as the race."

But the full quality of this author cannot be fairly shown except by a specimen on an ampler scale. Here is one, taken from within the same limits almost at random, of his characteristic gratuitous verbiage and gushing redundancy about next to nothing:—

"Stevenson's Highland inheritance being, it was thought, indisputable, the pertinent question arose, Whence did it come? What remote, forgotten ancestor, in lonely glen or by the wild western sea, bequeathed to him that legacy of magic and mysticism, that haunting, eerie imagination, that uncanny intuition and weird, half-ghostly gift of second-sight, which critics found so plentifully displayed in his works? Did the dauntless Rob Roy actually move in his blood to break out erratically in the tame nineteenth century? Was he, in short, a son of the Children of the Mist, the late descendant of a proscribed clan, masquerading under a safe and respectable alias? It is a pretty and romantic theory, and it pleased Stevenson greatly. Students of heredity with a taste for patness in pedigree were equally pleased. Ah! now the volatile, elusive Stevenson was accounted for! Personal traits and idiosyncrasies were cited as incontrovertible evidence. His odd un-Lowland appearance, his manners, gestures, tastes, all that was bizarre and ludicrous in him, what were they but part of the Celtic inheritance? Was he freakish, elfish, now absurdly gay, now as absurdly gloomy? Here was the explanation. He was a Celt. The golden key to puzzles and paradoxes had been found, and the secret make-up of Robert Louis Stevenson could be read like an open book. It was all as simple, as convenient as a crib to Euclid, as authentic as an amateur astronomer's guide to the mysteries of the Solar System. For his own part, be it repeated, the hypothesis of a Highland ancestry fascinated Stevenson, and he died believing it true."

This typical passage comes in connection with what seems to me—although I would hardly accept it definitely without further testing and inquiry—the one solid contribution made by Mr. Steuart to our knowledge about Stevenson. I mean the discovery, as concerns his origin and ancestry, of a French descent on the mother's side through a family of Lizars, originally Lisouris, the first of whom had been a refugee into Scotland at the time of the Huguenot persecutions. This may be held to give at least a plausible account of the seemingly alien, rich, and sunny Southern ardours of temperament which went along with harder elements in the constitution of this gifted son of Edinburgh. For the rest, the faults which have forced themselves on my notice in this bulky and pretentious book are many, and many the superfluities, while the virtues I have found are few. For a final life of Stevenson the time in my judgment is not ripe. New material, some of which will need a good deal of digesting, keeps appearing from day to day, and will doubtless continue

to appear. For a provisional, semi-official Life from the family point of view nothing could have served its purpose better than that of Mr. Graham Balfour. Mr. Steuart's book is by way of being a protest and a reaction against the over-favourable and blameless view which Mr. Balfour, and a number of other writers whom Mr. Steuart does not specify, have given of his subject's character. He uses language of preposterous exaggeration and iteration about the "plaster saint" which Stevenson's admirers have made of him, "the sham impeccability which an egregious worship has foisted upon him." I have not myself come across many instances of such treatment; but then I am less in the habit of reading other people's accounts of R. L. S.—of which there is already a whole library extant, much of it certainly quite superfluous—than I am of living with my own thoughts and recollections of him. But the thought of such plaster images seems to have become a kind of nightmare to Mr. Steuart, and he has held it his duty to shatter them and substitute what he considers a more living portrait.

With reference to the secret dissipations of Stevenson's youth, by which, from amidst the austerities and conventionalities of respectable family and civic life in Edinburgh, he sought relief from the double pressure of a fervid animal temperament and an inexhaustible human curiosity,—with reference to these Mr. Steuart has shown, shall we say a spirit of diligent and laudable research, or rather one of gloating, prurient inquisitiveness? "To peep and pry," he writes, "into the dark corners of the life of man or woman merely to gratify the prurient-minded is a despicable business and one which in no circumstances whatever would I undertake." But that, whether he realizes it or not, is just exactly what he has in point of fact done. He has raked out and set forth in full, in an early chapter of his book, the names of a whole string of poor daughters of joy with whom—on evidence, be it remembered, which must date from some fifty years back—he alleges Stevenson to have had relations. And he indulges in voluble, gushing, to my mind nauseously sentimental, speculations about the character of one of these girls with whom such relations seem to have been closer and tenderer than with the rest. Moreover he charges other writers on Stevenson, but always in vague general terms and without using names, with ignoring such elements in his life. Personally I cannot plead guilty. "He had not only the poet's mind," I have declared, "but the poet's senses: in youth ginger was only too hot in his mouth, and the chimes at midnight only too favourite a music." I do not know that much more need have been said about the matter: but so much everyone interested in Stevenson is bound to know and take for granted.

On the most favourable view of Mr. Steuart's style as a biographer, redundancy and iteration must, I think, be noted, especially in his earlier chapters, as its most conspicuous features; and next, I should say, his habitual failure to furnish evidence for particular statements. He gives a copious list of authorities, verbal and other, in his preface, but next to no footnotes. And next, and perhaps most unfortunate, since it seems to be quite instinctive and unconscious, comes his habit of continually hazarding a mere guess as to this or that matter of fact, and on that guess proceeding to build a conclusion or found an inference or series of inferences which he afterwards treats as ascertained facts. Here is a comparatively harmless instance from the account of Stevenson's nurse Cummy (short for Cunningham):—

"A Covenanter in the bone, she stood for her faith with all the grim, fierce fidelity of her grim, fierce forefathers. In all likelihood some of them were at Drumclog, Bothwell Brig, Rullion Green, or other fields made glorious by martyrdom, and faced Claverhouse and his dragoons, not without inflicting casualties. For her as for them the Bible was God's own word, full of menace, dark with the terrors of damnation, but happily, also, an infallible warrant for taking vengeance on enemies."

It cannot but sound offensively patronizing to say so, but I must think that Mr. Steuart's words fail sometimes faithfully to express his meaning: or else they would not be so often in contradiction with each other, as for instance here, in his figurative account of Stevenson's handling of the tools of his literary workshop:—

"It is an amazing spectacle. The sparks fly from his anvil, filling the air; the chips from his axe, the shavings

Oh! Stella

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from his plane litter the floor; the rasping of the file almost sets the teeth on edge. It is smithy and carpenter's shop in one, a literary factory where the neophyte may delight his soul by watching the ardent operator at work, with a joy and a determination which are infectious."

How can the rasping of a file delight the soul of a neophyte or anybody else? But this manner of "hedging," or saying a thing and its reverse, affirming it and withdrawing it in one sentence, is habitual with our author. Failure to express his meaning with exactness and moderation may account for a phrase on page 147 about Stevenson's being "nursed into authorship," which is offensive without apparently being offensively meant. And he has a remarkable aptitude for imparting a wrong colour to any incident which he has to relate on hearsay or at second hand: thus his account of Stevenson's relations at Mentone with his Russian friend Madame Garschine and her daughter Nelitchka, of which I was myself a daily witness, is quite gratuitously untrue: Stevenson's real hourly delight and preoccupation were with the child and not with her mother.

A like failure to express his meaning with exactness and moderation may perhaps partly account for Mr. Steuart's, to my mind, very unjust and unressembling portrait of Stevenson's wife. No man ever had a more devoted, or in most things a better suited and more judicious, mate than the woman whom Stevenson went through so much to make his own. Her vivid, clear-cut, and strongly coloured personality could leave no one indifferent; nor was she herself indifferent to the qualities of anyone she encountered, especially if their influence bore in any way on her husband's health or welfare. Speaking personally, I can only say that from first to last she made a friend of me in the fullest sense of the word,—a sure evidence of a generous nature, and one far from usual, in the relations of a wife with the friends of her husband's bachelor days. Between her and Henley, on the other hand, there came a breach that was never healed; but in my judgment the faults were wholly on his side. The cause of breach was not what has often been represented: it was her impatient resentment at Henley's small consideration for Stevenson's health in pursuance of the joint projects of the two for the stage. The crippled but none the less boisterous lustiness of Henley's personality, his insistence on their collaboration under conditions which Stevenson's health could not stand and on labours which never brought either success or profit, roused the latent dragon in Fanny Stevenson: after a while she peremptorily put an end to such collaboration, and in my judgment she was quite right. Of all these matters the account given in Mr. Steuart's book is detailed and full, but derived, in my view, from sources much too partial to Henley and to the wife consequently quite unjust.

For the rest, it seems to me that Mr. Steuart continually spoils his narrative by trying to put things in a coloured and vivid way, with results often of absurd distortion and exaggeration, as for instance in his account of the scepticism on religious matters which was current in Stevenson's youth, and his participation in which was so sore a blow to his father (pp. 104, 106). In reference to these matters our author makes the characteristically offensive suggestion that Louis began to have his religious difficulties "thirsting, it may be, for sensation." In trying to describe Louis's way of dressing in his youth, our author again exaggerates the picture till it is unrecognizable:—

"The long hair tossed by the wind; the antique straw hat set at an angle meant to be rakish, but in reality merely clownish; the velvet jacket, shapeless with age and use; the foreign look, assiduously cultivated, as it appeared; the lank, loose, ill-jointed figure, as of an animated skeleton flaunting itself in the face of day; the general air of queerness and affectation—all this seemed an outrage, a studied insult, to Edinburgh respectability. In the street people giggled as he passed or stood staring in wonder and derision."

Of course his hair never waved in the wind, though he wore it long by way of safeguard against catching cold: and the more or less shabby and rakish clothing which he used partly from whim, but chiefly from want of cash to buy better, was a thing one forgot after one had been in his company five minutes. Personally, from training and association, I was as likely, I suppose, as anyone to be put off in those early days by such apparel; but under the

spell of his companionship, after the first half-hour of our acquaintance, I simply never thought more about it. Neither did it the least affect his acceptance at the Savile Club, where the externals of Bohemianism were by no means in vogue. Moreover it must be remembered that with *him*, differing intensely as he did in nature and being from his average fellow-youths, the true affectation would perhaps have been that he should have forced himself to an external conformity with their ways even if he could have afforded it.

It seems unkind to add to the list of faults which any careful reader of Mr. Steuart's pages must find with his work, as for instance his almost habitual misspelling of proper names. And though I do not think his book was wanted or is well done, there is a good deal in it, especially in its closing chapters, and indeed throughout the second volume, which can be read, if scarcely with pleasure, at all events without annoyance. It is fair to say that even its faults of long-windedness and exaggeration get mitigated towards the end; but for an adequate or definitive life of R. L. S., I, speaking as one at least, and perhaps the closest, of his surviving friends, can by no manner of means accept it.

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Elsie and the Child: a Tale of Riceyman Steps, and Other Stories. By ARNOLD BENNETT. (Cassell. 7s. 6d.)
In the Land of Youth. By JAMES STEPHENS. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d.)

BOTH Mr. Bennett and Mr. Stephens are writers of the older generation; they have presumably reached their maturity. Yet these two books which bear their names are definitely disappointing. They do not score new triumphs, they repeat old ones; and old triumphs may be triumphant enough, but they are always cold. Mr. Bennett gives one less uneasiness than Mr. Stephens. The author of "The Old Wives' Tale" has made himself into a novelist, as Nietzsche said Wagner made himself into a musician. Many years ago he saw that the writing of a good novel was a practical proposition, and he applied himself to it. He was successful. A workman of genius, a systematic and tireless workman, he thereupon laid down rules for himself, mapped out his jobs, and did them. He has been doing them ever since, and no one can gainsay that he has done them well. But Mr. Stephens's genius is in an unusual degree spontaneous. We read him for his inspirations, his profound and happy fancies, his subtle and natural thoughts. And it is saddening to see him in his latest book repeating himself with all the evidences of having conned himself beforehand long and carefully. The difference between "In the Land of Youth" and "The Crock of Gold" is that while the one was packed with Mr. Stephens's charm, the other presents Mr. Stephens deliberately setting himself to charm us. He has written this book, in other words, not as himself—and we ask for nothing better—but as a Mr. James Stephens who is the author of three or four charming books. It is disconcerting. Happily, there is no author of whom one can prophesy less safely than of Mr. Stephens. His next book may easily be more entrancing than "The Crock of Gold."

Mr. Bennett has not practised very persistently the art of the short story, and "Elsie and the Child," containing short stories, makes one glad, on the whole, that he has not. In his novels he is an acknowledged master in building up an environment for his characters. It is a method of achieving verisimilitude as legitimate as any other, and a great deal of nonsense has been written in depreciation of Mr. Bennett's use of it. But it is not a method which works effectively in the short story, and it is unfortunately Mr. Bennett's only method. He cannot breathe life into his characters, apparently, until he has first created, more in detail than most other novelists, the environment in which they are destined to breathe. But in a short story he cannot provide them with surroundings nearly so sumptuous as they ask for, and the result is that they have a curiously lost, irrelevant air; they all seem to be looking round apprehensively for more solid ground. As it is, the properties in these short stories are far too massive for their length. In Mr. Bennett's novels, where the action sometimes covers a lifetime, there was fitness in staging the characters grandly and sumptuously, in describing with detail the rooms in which they

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would live for ten or twenty years, the knick-knacks which would from time to time touch their lives and colour and be coloured by their experiences. But the short stories in this volume are hardly more than episodes, and although every episode must needs happen in a setting of some kind, we have no reason to think that the setting is always psychologically significant. It may have no associations for the characters except those which the particular episode may leave. Yet when Mr. Bennett puts a woman in a room for five minutes he cannot resist the temptation to describe that room. He has carried over into the short story—which sometimes describes the action of a few hours—the technique which served him admirably in novels chronicling the life of a century. The result could scarcely be happy, and it is not. There are one or two passable stories in the volume, but none good enough for Mr. Bennett. He has simply not adapted himself to the shorter form. His descriptions are as exact and economical as any in his earlier books, but they are curiously irrelevant.

"In the Land of Youth" contains two variations by Mr. Stephens on themes provided by the old Irish mythology. It has fine moments: the story of the contest between Midir and Eochaid, occupying a third of the book, is as original and beautiful as anything Mr. Stephens has ever written; the story of the bewitching of the pigs of Munster and Connacht is quite inimitable. But there are faults to set against these beauties. Mr. Stephens shows an alarming incapacity to escape from his mannerisms, which are far less charming, simply because they are more deliberate, than they used to be. Very often his style is so artificial that the simple outlines of the theme are lost. Now and then among his wise and subtle observations one is drawn up by the seemingly profound, the unconsciously platitudinous. These are all things which annoy us more in a work of genius than in a moderately good book. They spoil our enjoyment; one cannot help feeling that they must spoil Mr. Stephens's as well.

EDWIN MUIR.

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The Dictionary of English Furniture. By PERCY MACQUOID and RALPH EDWARDS. Vol. I. ("Country Life." £5 6s.)

THIS is the first volume of a work which promises to fill an important gap in books of reference relating to the arts in England. The title is ambitious, but even if "The Dictionary" does not entirely justify itself as saying all that there is to be said on so large a subject—for there are a few perhaps unimportant omissions—it is nevertheless treated in an interesting and at the same time a business-like manner. It is finely printed and has a very large number of photogravure illustrations in the text. The few coloured illustrations are not quite so satisfactory, but that perhaps is rather the fault of the furniture than of the printers, for furniture does not readily lend itself to coloured reproduction.

The period covered by the Dictionary is from the Middle Ages to the late Georgian, and the first volume goes from A to Ch. It includes therefore many of the most important articles of furniture—beds, bookcases, buffets, bureaux, cabinets, carpets, and chairs, not to mention baby-cages and bird-cages, for which considerable space and several charming illustrations are given. The authors seem to show a slight preference in their selection of illustrations for the furniture of the eighteenth century, especially that of Chippendale and Adam, over the earlier periods or the late Georgian. This preference, however, is justifiable, for the eighteenth century was without doubt the highest point of achievement in English furniture, both artistically and from the point of view of craftsmanship. They include, in particular, a great many examples of "Chinese" Chippendale.

Mr. Percy Macquoid is already well known as an expert in furniture. He is the author of "A History of English Furniture," and adds to his knowledge of the subject a thorough acquaintance with English collections, both public and private. He and Mr. Ralph Edwards, in the present work, have had the help of other no less well-qualified contributors. Mr. Avray Tipping writes a long and pleasant introduction, which may, however, be considered by some to be unnecessary in a technical dictionary. This introduction is illustrated with reproductions of pictures from old manu-

scripts, interiors of rooms, and a few of Hogarth's pictures which show typical furnishings and decoration of the early eighteenth century. Mr. J. C. Rogers writes notes on the various kinds of woods, Mr. W. G. Thompson contributes a full and interesting article on carpets; other contributors are Mr. Ingleson Goodison and Miss Jourdain, who is herself the author of two scholarly works on the same subject.

MR. CONRAD'S PLAYS.

Laughing Anne, and One Day More. Two Plays by JOSEPH CONRAD. With an Introduction by JOHN GALSWORTHY. (John Castle. 6s.)

THE many admirers of Conrad's early novels, who felt a little uneasy and disappointed on reading his later books, will find no consolation in these two plays. None of Conrad's work is negligible to those who lived while he was writing; there were too few really good novels produced in his period for us to neglect anything he wrote. Whether his reputation, inadvisedly over-boomed by his adherents, will stand firmly in the future; or whether it will fall with a disastrous crash, like that of Henry James; cannot be foretold. Four or five books by Conrad will perhaps still be commonly read at the end of the century. They aimed at permanence, and they appear to have achieved it by virtue of a rather noble rectitude, artistic and spiritual; a rectitude hard to define, but easily suggested by naming its antithesis—the ungrammatical hysterics of Mr. D. H. Lawrence. There is nothing of the *canaille* in Conrad's books; his worst shortcomings are a certain heaviness and solemnity, a kind of slumberous brooding. But, like all great artists, Conrad makes superb use of his defects; in the "Heart of Darkness," for instance, where the mood of solemn brooding is so appropriate and so aptly oppressive.

The arts of narrative and drama, if theoretically distinct, are in practice deeply entangled. The law, or rather tendency, of syncretism is so marked here that success in one genre by no means implies failure in the other. Conrad possessed the art of creating character and even a certain sense of dramatic situation; but his truly original gifts were narrative—a command of descriptive writing and of a continuous evocation of a mood. The descriptive and brooding Conrad is romantic, in spite of the obviously tremendous effort for precision; but his dialogue is almost always a bare realism, contrasting sharply with the masses of luxuriant narrative in which it is set. Thus, when Conrad attacked the problems of drama by writing these two plays, he fought with his least effective weapons. To alter the metaphor, he wrote them with his left hand. It is of small importance to ask whether Conrad did or did not observe the technical restrictions (often absurd enough) of the modern stage. The point is that his genius lay more in the evocation of mood and character by means of description and less in the presentation of dramatic situations by means of character revealed in dialogue.

"Laughing Anne" and "One Day More" must be judged to be two interesting failures. They might be described as Conrad's two weakest short stories presented in dialogue form. We get, as it were, the valueless skeleton of Conrad's art without its organic clothing, which alone is precious. These plays may not represent "Conrad *en pantoufles*," but they assuredly do not represent Conrad the creative artist. Tendencies one prefers to overlook, tendencies which are disciplined to insignificance in the great novels and stories, are here undesirably obtrusive. The Henty element is strong in "Laughing Anne," and "One Day More" rather suggests a sketch by Mr. W. W. Jacobs with no comic relief. The experiences of a mariner, one reflects, are not readily dramatized; brusque periods of action, demanding great and sudden energy of character, alternate with long periods of comparative inertia and reflection. What we value in Conrad's books was chiefly the fruit of the periods of reflection.

"One Day More" is undoubtedly the better of the two plays. It is built around the situation of the roving sailor and the lonely girl. Bessie Carvil is tyrannized by a blind and repulsive father; her consolation in life is derived from conversation with a retired skipper, Captain Hagberd, who suffers from the dementia of an *idée fixe*. Harry Hagberd ran away to sea, against his father's wishes, and the father,

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deranged by grief, persuades himself that Harry will come home "to-morrow" in answer to his advertisements. Meanwhile Captain Hagberd fills his cottage with furniture to be used by Harry, who, in the old man's obstinate madness, has been marked down as Bessie's husband, and unfortunately Bessie in her lonely and unhappy life has come to look on this almost as a certain hope. Then, of course, the day comes. Harry, stranded in London with a shipmate, comes to borrow five pounds from his father; and the madman does not recognize his son. Bessie is left to deal with young Hagberd, who, unluckily for her, guesses the marriage plan from the ravings of his father. Harry attracts Bessie, which is natural enough; but in his blunt way he points out that marriage is not for him, borrows half a sovereign from her, kisses her violently and contemptuously, and goes off calmly, leaving her with a broken life and heart. The play ends with Bessie sobbing on the ground, tortured by the remarks of the imbecile Captain, and finally brought back to dreary reality by the howls of "Bessie" from her blind father. "A faint flash of lightning, followed by a very low rumble of thunder."

"Laughing Anne" is staged in some Eastern tropical country. Treated in a rather more horrible way it might have made a good Grand Guignol spectacle, as Conrad himself suggested; for it contains a Man Without Hands, a rather sordid domestic tragedy, several murders, and a handsome expenditure of revolver ammunition in the final "shoot-up." Laughing Anne had drifted from one man to another and was left with "somebody's" child and a last lover, Bamtz, an incompetent coward. Captain Davidson, a skipper with a large sum of money on board, had apparently some obligation to Anne; at all events he agreed to take his ship to a distant station run by Bamtz, in order to help the couple to live. Bamtz and several other ruffians, cowed by the ferocious Man Without Hands, plot to murder Davidson and to steal his money; even Anne aids by tying a heavy weight on the handless man's right stump to serve him as a weapon, but she warns Davidson. In the ensuing *fracas*, Anne is murdered by the Man Without Hands, who is shot—along with the other conspirators apparently—by Davidson as he rescues Anne's child. "Poor Anne!" says Davidson, as he looks at her body; "you are on my conscience, but your boy shall have his chance."

Mr. John Galsworthy contributes a critical introduction to the volume; it will not add to his reputation.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

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THE Wilson literature is already extensive. Criticisms of Woodrow Wilson's actions at the Peace Conference, and of his whole theory of international relations, with widely differing estimates of his contribution towards the peace by which the world was to be made safe for democracy, began to appear even before his death. Attack was met by defence from those who shared his ideals and admired his personality, and both points of view have been expressed with such violence that now any account of him inevitably takes on a controversial character. He was evidently a man to whom no one could be indifferent; one of those who must always be devotedly loved or intensely hated. His nature was not easy to understand, nor his qualities to appreciate. "A phrase-maker, a dreamer, an intellectual autocrat; a dogmatic, stubborn pedagogue; an egotist wielding power with Napoleonic ambition; a breaker of friendships, the ungrateful recipient of personal and political service . . . a muddling idealist." These, in Mr. Lawrence's words, are some of the reproaches which have been levelled at him. He was not great enough to satisfy a captious world; because he did not prove infallible, it refused to recognize the vision and unflinching fidelity to an ideal which rank him with the noblest figures in history.

Mr. Lawrence was closely connected with Wilson, first as a student at Princeton, and later as a Press correspondent. The portrait which he paints is that of a man by no means

inhuman, nor devoid either of humour or a sense of proportion—a character full of contradictory elements and impossible to understand unless every side of it is taken into account at once. He defends Wilson's policy at every turn, but in so moderate a manner that one does not suspect him of partisanship; and, indeed, his defence is the strongest possible—a statement of the considerations which made it seem to Wilson himself inevitable that he must act as he did. At one point only his arguments seem rather far-fetched, when he sets out to prove that the neutrality of the United States during the first two and a half years of the war was not only not a disadvantage, but a positive asset to the Allies. No one can fail to sympathize with Wilson's attitude, as both his speeches and actions illustrated it, in the difficult days when his one desire was to keep America out of the war in order that one nation might be left sane when the time came to make peace. But it casts no discredit on his motives to admit that the war might have been over far sooner if America had decided earlier to cast in her weight on our side.

The real tragedy of Wilson's life was not that he broke himself in the service of the League of Nations, but that in his last years his illness betrayed him into words and actions unworthy of his true nature. Among these, according to Mr. Lawrence, was the dismissal of Lansing, which he considers could only have been the result of a fit of temper. Mr. Daniels, on the other hand, claims that in his relations with Lansing, Wilson "showed himself a patient and long-suffering man," and that the Secretary of State had amply deserved his dismissal long before it came. But Mr. Daniels is one of those fiery champions who are up in arms in every other sentence. His book is a Wilson epic rather than a biography. Its early chapters are less valuable to the English reader because they are not so much a straightforward narrative as an essay on Wilson's policy, divided not chronologically, but under the heads of different characteristics. The most interesting part of the book is that which deals with the period of neutrality, on which, as Secretary of the Navy, he speaks with peculiar authority. He discusses in some detail the correspondence which passed between the United States and the various belligerents. It comes as a shock to find that our reply to America's request that we should "find a basis for agreement which will relieve neutral ships engaged in peaceful commerce from the great dangers which they will incur" was regarded as less satisfactory than that of Germany. In plain language, which Mr. Daniels is much too diplomatic to use, the Americans considered that throughout 1915 we kept up a long-winded defence of a position which by international law was indefensible.

Mr. Daniels's book is a proof of the passionate loyalty which Woodrow Wilson could inspire in those who worked with him; but it contains no tribute as complete as this simple sentence from Mr. Lawrence: "There is no precedent by which we can judge Woodrow Wilson because nobody ever had Woodrow Wilson's job to do."

AN IRISH COSMOPOLITAN.

Les Sources françaises de Goldsmith. By A. L. SELLS, B.A. (Paris: Champion.)

THIS is another volume in the admirable "Bibliothèque de la littérature comparée," in which has already been published an excellent work on Swift reviewed in a recent number. This book on Goldsmith is a delightful one, and Mr. Sells has been particularly happy in his subject. Goldsmith, being Irish, attained more easily than his English associates that easy cosmopolitanism which constitutes one of the charms of the eighteenth century. But he only twice visited France, though he apparently received when a boy a good grounding in French from an Irish priest.

All through his life Goldsmith was an extremely hard-working journalist. His knowledge of French stood him in very good stead in his profession, as it enabled him to steal the material for his current contributions without much danger of detection, especially as he was careful to choose comparatively obscure authors for his victims. But to one French author Goldsmith returns again and again throughout his literary life—*Marivaux*. Their position in letters is not dissimilar, and Goldsmith was evidently inspired by a deep

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affection for the other's writings. In his "Citizen of the World," he copies almost word for word from the "Spectateur français," the well-known number "The Story of a Philosophical Cobbler" being little else than a translation from Marivaux. But it is not only in this occasional journalism that he has recourse to Marivaux. Even "The Vicar of Wakefield" seems to owe something to "Les Aventures de l'Inconnu," a story which Marivaux begins in No. 21 of the "Spectateur français." In drama the resemblance is closer still. The "Good-Natured Man" could not have existed but for "Le Legs," nor "She Stoops to Conquer" but for "Le jeu de l'amour et du hasard."

Almost the last and among the most delightful of Goldsmith's writings was "Animated Nature," where he followed Buffon closely whenever he could.

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On reaching England again, he became Literary Editor of "The Megaphone," and not the least entertaining pages of a sparkling book are those describing his adventures as controller of "Page Four." In this capacity he, a slow writer, dependant upon mood for inspiration, was unexpectedly called upon to report the Nurse Cavell Memorial Service at St. Paul's—a task that was duly accomplished, but only with a "physical and moral agony" which, he tells us, took years off his life. His connection with "The Megaphone" came to an untimely end, owing to his failure to review Martha Caraway's new novel, "Partners in Sin"—the disguise will readily be pierced—on the day of publication. There followed a further period of teaching in India, and then the War called Mr. Candler to service—very lightly and modestly passed over—in many parts of Europe and the Near East. In a final, whimsical chapter, Mr. Candler rounds off his adventures by describing the changes wrought by marriage in the life of a roving bachelor.

So much for the matter of Mr. Candler's book. Of the manner it would be difficult to speak too appreciatively. His prose, suffused throughout by an inner glow, reflects a highly individual but unaffected personality, in which the

objective and subjective faculties are excellently balanced, and in which the philosopher never breaks step with the traveller. Mr. Candler's descriptive powers are wonderfully effective in their avoidance of all conventional devices. He does not, like many travellers, merely wish to impress. He really wants to describe; and his "prosaic inventory" of the charms of the Salween, "the loveliest of rivers," is but one example of his ability to make the reader see clearly in imagination what he has never beheld with the fleshly eye.

NOVELS IN BRIEF

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* * *

Rebellion. By J. A. STEUART. (Sampson Low. 7s. 6d.)

The story of Saul and David, with its obvious clash of character, seems more suitable to a play after the manner of the late Stephen Phillips than to a novel. It would be uncritical to ask for Flaubertian descriptions in recompense: busied with his main characters, Mr. Steuart generalizes his scenes, and avoids archaeological colour. His David is mild, moral, benevolent as a statue by Donatello—curiously akin to the hero of popular romance. In wrestling with the absorbing character of Saul, tortured, perplexed, humane, or brutal from his very sense of pity, very near to us, Mr. Steuart has hardly been successful. This failure lies in his external method. But the radical cause of the difference between result and ambition is the dialogue: he has not effected a sufficiently convincing compromise; Saul, David, and the rest talk like psalmists, and descend into colloquialisms that are, by contrast, humorously incongruous.

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FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

WALL STREET BOOM—CZECHOSLOVAKIAN FINANCE—AUSTRIAN STERLING BONDS.

THE expected reaction in the stock markets came appropriately on the day when the Lord Mayor's Show effectually impeded the channels of business in the City of London. The prospect of a general recovery in trade remains, as we have said, largely a matter of faith. This country's prosperity is so dependent upon international trade, which may be affected as much by the weather in South America or India as by a war in China or a revolution in Spain, that the recovery cannot be a simple, uniform affair. The United States, on the other hand, chiefly dependent on its home markets, presents a different picture. The Wall Street buoyancy which has followed Mr. Coolidge's election has something more to recommend it than the indiscriminating optimism in Throgmorton Street induced by Mr. Baldwin's victory. There is, for example, the sudden turn of fortune that has come to the American wheat belt; the building outlook for the winter is good; the railroads are buying heavily; the iron and steel industry is showing more unfilled orders; automobile sales and output continue at a satisfactory rate; car loadings of merchandise and miscellaneous freight in October broke all records. An index of the change is the number of dealings on the New York Stock Exchange. These are now daily in excess of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million shares.

Inspired, if unilluminating comments have appeared in some financial journals on the recently published figures of the Czechoslovak Budget for 1925. There is an evident desire to create both in London and New York an atmosphere favourable for another external loan. Yet it is less than six months since the second "tranche" of the Czechoslovak secured loan was issued. There are actually two Czechoslovakian budgets, the general and the "investment." In the general budget for 1925 the expenditure is shown as 15,974 million crowns (as against 16,391 millions for 1924, and 18,812 millions for 1923), and the revenue as 15,701 million crowns. Thus the general budget does not quite balance, but the deficit of about 273 million crowns (at the present rate of exchange, say, £1,780,000) is not a serious matter. The figures of the so-called "investment" budget, despite a decrease of 910 millions as compared with 1924, still amount to kr. 1,319,000,000, bringing the combined deficits of both budgets up to the equivalent of £10,000,000. Unless successful efforts are made to fund this deficit it must be added to the large existing floating debt. It is true that this floating debt is held internally, but it is causing serious inconvenience to the banks and financial institutions in Czechoslovakia, whose funds are tied up in "Treasury bills" instead of being employed in the trade and industries of the country.

In these circumstances it is not surprising to hear of attempts to raise fresh funds in London and New York, but responsible authorities in those centres naturally consider this appeal comes too quickly after the last loan, and is accompanied by too little evidence of any serious attempt to deal with the fundamental cause of these budget deficits. When well-secured Government Bonds with an interest rate of 8 per cent. sell no higher than par, it is clear that a Finance Minister who proposes to raise yet another external loan has hardly grasped the seriousness of the position, and has still to learn that his real remedy is to stop spending money he cannot raise at home.

We cannot help thinking that English holders of "Czechos" would do well to accept the present market price of about 99½, and we suggest that if investment in another foreign loan is desired—though we do not

argue the desirability—the German 7 per cent. Sterling Loan is a suitable alternative. There is much to be said for buying the French issue of the German loan. The slice of this loan issued in Paris was £3,000,000, and, as is the case with all sections issued in Europe, the interest and ultimate redemption are payable in sterling. There is naturally a lower price and a smaller market in London for the French than for the English issue, but it is quite easy to deal in the former at the present time on the London Stock Exchange, and the advantage in price is appreciable. The fully paid price of the English issue is about 97½, while the French issue can be bought for about 94. To this must be added the cost of stamping the bonds, which brings the cost up to 96. At this price the running yield is £7 5s. 10d.

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